

THE INDEPENDENT

No 3,384

MONDAY 25 AUGUST 1997

WEATHER: Warm (R 45p) 40p

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE GREATEST CAMPAIGN EVER

MEDIA+ WITH PAGES OF APPOINTMENTS

Media+



24-PAGE SPORT SECTION

SCHUMACHER REIGNS IN THE RAIN

THE MONDAY INTERVIEW PAGE 13

JIMMY McGOVERN NO MORE SHOWING OFF

Volcano island gives Short shrift

Beleaguered Montserratians object to minister's criticisms

Phil Davison
Woodlands, Montserrat
Andrew Marshall

Clare Short sailed into a Caribbean storm last night after she lashed out at the islanders of Montserrat.

A hail of criticism descended on her from the island and from the Opposition as she claimed the inhabitants were seeking excessive compensation after most of the island was destroyed by a volcanic eruption. In an interview with *The Independent*, Montserrat's new Chief Minister, David Brandt, attacked Ms Short and challenged her to see the situation for herself.

"She is refusing to come. I wonder if she can bear what she will see," he said.

Ms Short refused to visit the British possession to see conditions there for herself. "I'm not planning to go to possibly get more inaccurate denunciations of what we have been doing. I've actually got commitments to go to a lot of other places in the next few weeks," she said yesterday.

She said that junior minister George Foulkes should visit the island instead. But Mr Foulkes is not of flavour on the month on Montserrat, and Mr Brandt said he would not be welcome. Islanders believe that Mr Foulkes helped spark the latest crisis by talking of a possible "cataclysmic" eruption threatening the whole island. "Britain's own scientists say the north of the island is safe," said Mr Brandt, sworn in by British Governor Frank Savage on Friday after street protests forced the resignation of his predecessor, Bertrand Osborne.

More than half of the population of Montserrat has left since the Soufriere Hills volcano returned to life in July 1995 after nearly four centuries of dormancy.

Eruptions in June destroyed seven villages and killed 19 people and the capital, Plymouth, has been razed almost to the ground. Britain offered compensation of £2,500 per islander, which Montserratians considered far too low, sparking off the present political eruption from Ms Short. She accused the island's leaders of "sheer irresponsibility" in an interview with a Sunday newspaper, saying "they will be wanting golden elephants next".

Later, she apparently thought better of these comments. She said the reference to elephants was "extremely unfortunate," adding "I made a joke about asking for more and more and more... It's a misrepresentation of what I was saying."

She said that "internal politics" in Montserrat had made the situation worse. "Part of it was posing as being the great critic of Britain, demanding more and more, denouncing what we were doing. That misrepresentation of what we were doing."

Mr Brandt said that the islanders' demands were not excessive. "We are not asking for luxury. Our people have lost everything they have. We are asking for them (the Government) to give us an opportunity to make a new start," said Mr Brandt.

Ms Short's handling of the affair also came under attack from critics nearer home. The Conservative international development spokesman, Alastair Goodlad, said that Ms Short should apologise for her "insensitive and insulting remarks," saying "At a time when the islanders desperately need help, all the Labour government can do is be rude about them."

Menzies Campbell, the Liberal Democrats' chief foreign affairs spokesman, called on the Government to use its reserve fund to help the islanders.

"We need an apology from Clare Short for her insensitive and insulting remarks and an immediate statement from the Government as to what they are going to do about this mess."

Such is the anger on Montserrat now that islanders are refusing to take up the offer of evacuation. Only 16 of the remaining 4,000 islanders showed up for a British-planned "voluntary evacuation" to Antigua at the weekend. Mr Brandt said the British government was "forcing us to choose between misery and the unknown."

Island declares 'war', page 8



League leader: Trinity College, Cambridge, which has topped the table measuring exam results at the university

Photograph: Jason Bye

Trinity is new Cambridge pinnacle

Judith Judd
Education Editor

Trinity is the top college in this year's Tompkins table of Cambridge University exam results.

It moves up from sixth place to supplant Christ's, last year's leader, in the table which many high-flying sixth-formers use to help them choose a Cambridge college.

Trinity is also the college with the highest percentage of first-class degrees, up to 34.1 per cent from 26 per cent last year. At Christ's, the college with the second highest number of firsts,

this year's figure was 26.2 per cent.

The main table ranks undergraduate colleges by allocating five points for a first, three for an upper second, two for a lower second and one for a third. It shows the percentage of the maximum possible if every candidate had had a first.

New Hall, one of the two remaining women's colleges, remains bottom, just below Corpus, which fell 10 places from thirteenth. New Hall was also bottom of the firsts' table with 9.7 per cent. The other all-female college is Newnham.

Oxford University, Cambridge's old rival, frowns on college exam results tables and the university makes it as difficult as possible for anyone to collect the information.

A university spokeswoman said: "It isn't something we encourage because we think it doesn't give a true picture of colleges. Nor is it particularly helpful."

But Peter Tompkins, a partner in Price Waterhouse, who compiles the tables said no one from the university had tried to stifle his annual efforts.

He said the tables were a useful indicator of the colleges which were doing better over a long period of time. "The precise position is not as important as the general level. The top college is not necessarily better than the second. The significance of appearing consistently in the bottom four might be cause for concern or in the top four a cause for confidence."

Mr Tompkins, who receives many inquiries from schools and pupils, said league tables could be self-fulfilling. "People are attracted to the top colleges. The best people apply there and they get more candidates."

The 1997 Tompkins table

Place (1996 in brackets)	College	% Firsts
1 (8)	Trinity	34.1
2 (1)	Christ's	26.2
3 (4)	Queens'	24.4
4 (11)	Sidney Sussex	23.0
5 (17)	Pembroke	22.4
6 (7)	Trinity Hall	22.4
7 (12)	Emmanuel	22.3
8 (16)	Gonville & Caius	22.1
9 (9)	St Catherine's	21.9
10 (2)	St John's	21.0
11 (5)	Clare	20.8
12 (18)	Durham	20.7
13 (6)	Rosset	20.0
14 (3)	King's	19.3
15 (22)	Churchill	19.3
16 (19)	Salway	19.2
17 (14)	Magdalene	19.0
18 (20)	Newnham	18.9
19 (10)	Peterhouse	18.8
20 (18)	Jesus	18.5
21 (21)	Robinson	18.5
22 (23)	Orton	17.7
23 (13)	Corpus Christi	17.6
24 (24)	New Hall	16.1

Read The Independent on the World Wide Web
<http://www.independent.co.uk>

QUICKLY

Sinn Fein talks

Sinn Fein said it was confident a meeting would take place in the next few weeks between Tony Blair and Gerry Adams. Page 4

Libyan money allegedly used to sue 'Independent'

Steve Boggan

The bank account of a senior executive at *The Guardian* newspaper was used as a conduit for £250,000 of Libyan money to bankroll a libel action against *The Independent*, according to a former MI5 officer.

Victoria Britain, the newspaper's deputy foreign editor, was allegedly instrumental in the funding of a lawsuit brought by Kojo Tsikata, former head of the Ghanaian security service. Mr Tsikata issued a writ against *The Independent* in 1993 over an article which referred to the murder of three high-court judges in Ghana. The case is still going through the courts.

Yesterday Ms Britain's lawyers issued a statement saying she had never knowingly received money from Libyan sources.

But there was no rebuttal of the claim that £250,000 went through her bank account, and she did not deny the involvement of Mr Tsikata. Alan Rusbridger, the editor of *The Guardian*, drove to London from his Gloucestershire home for talks with Ms Britain last night.

Details of Ms Britain's alleged role in funding the suit against *The Independent* were revealed yesterday by David Shaylor, a former MI5 officer who said Ms Britain's telephone was tapped in 1993 after her bank told police about a deposit of £100,000 into her account. Under money-laundering laws, banks are required to report sudden unexplained appearances of large sums of money.

In an interview with the *Mail on Sunday* Mr Shaylor said MI5 quickly established that much of the money - which was later boosted to £250,000 - had been transferred from Libyan sources. He said they included the Libyan Arab Foreign Bank and Khalifa Ahmed Bazelya, head of the Libyan interest section at the Saudi Arabian embassy in London.

MI5 wrongly believed they were on to a serious - if unorthodox - money-laundering operation. However, after 12 months, they realised that some of the money was being paid to Bindman & Partners, a London firm of libel lawyers who were representing Mr Tsikata in his lawsuit against *The Independent*. There is no suggestion Bindman & Partners knew of the alleged origin of the money.

"The Libyan involvement was, on this occasion, no more than an attempt to curry favour with the Ghanaian regime by paying Tsikata's legal bills," said Mr Shaylor. When MI5 realised there was nothing more sinister in the arrangement than the funding of a libel action, surveillance of Ms Britain's north London home was halted.

Mr Tsikata sued the publishers of *The Independent* after a report in 1992 about a public inquiry into the execution of

three high-court judges in Ghana. The Court of Appeal upheld *The Independent's* argument that a fair and accurate report of the inquiry's proceedings was privileged. Last month, Mr Tsikata was refused permission to appeal this decision to the House of Lords. Mr Tsikata's solicitors have indicated that he intends to proceed to trial with the argument that *The Independent's* publication of the report was "malicious".

Last night Bindman & Partners, Ms Britain's solicitors, said: "We are assured by our client, Victoria Britain, deputy foreign editor of *The Guardian*, that she has never, to her knowledge, received any money at any time from Libya, either for her personal use or for any other purpose. She had never heard of Khalifa Ahmed Bazelya until she read his name in today's *Mail on Sunday*." She declined to comment further. *The Guardian* said it had nothing further to add.

NHS is £1bn worse off under Labour

Frank Abrams
Political Correspondent

Labour government policies have left the National Health Service £1bn worse off than it should have been since the election. It was claimed yesterday. Dr Evan Harris, the Liberal Democrats' NHS spokesman and a former member of the British Medical Association council, will produce figures next month showing that the service has seen real-terms cuts of at least half a billion. Another half billion raised through tax changes should have been channelled back into hospitals and doctors' surgeries but was used for other things, he adds.

Dr Harris also says he has evidence that hospitals are being forced to give priority to non-urgent operations such as breast reductions while patients needing cataract surgery or hip replacements are forced to wait. He will tell his party's annual conference in Eastbourne next month that measures such as an estimated £214m cut in social services' budgets will impact on the health service. Hospital admissions will rise because people will not receive all the care they need and waiting lists will grow longer because of "bed blocking" by patients with nowhere else to go. The effects could lead to increased costs of around £100m, he believes.

In addition, there will be more emergency admissions to hospitals over the next year, a rise related to the squeeze in other parts of the health service. The number of emergency admissions has already risen tenfold from 4,000 to 45,000 in the 14 months up to June this year, and it is believed this is partly because general practitioners are using accident and emergency departments to get patients into hospital quickly.

The decision by the Chancellor Gordon Brown to shift the inflation forecast upwards from 2 per cent to 2.75 per cent in the Budget would leave health authorities and trusts £350m worse off because they would have to

build higher spending into their plans, he says.

Dr Harris argues that the Government could have channelled money into the NHS from £60m clawed back from tax relief on private health insurance and from £350m raised through a 5p tax rise on cigarettes.

Government efforts to cut waiting lists have only served to exacerbate some of the problems, he says. Because hospitals have been told to prioritise patients who have been waiting more than 18 months for surgery, others whose need is greater are waiting longer than they would otherwise have done.

"It means someone somewhere with a cataract is being

deprioritised," he said. "Frank Dobson [the Secretary of State for Health] is having a very hard time at the hands of Gordon Brown. It was a political choice he made on every single one of these issues. They weren't committed to any of these things in the manifesto."

A Treasury spokesman said the Government's manifesto had made it clear that departmental spending totals would not be changed. "The Budget did make additional funds of £1.2m available for the health service. This is entirely in accordance with the manifesto commitments, and in any case extra money has been found," the spokesman said.

Laser sight correction in just seconds

Using the most advanced lasers, our specialist doctors can permanently treat short-sight and astigmatism. After a thorough eye examination and consultation you are given between 15 to 90 seconds of laser treatment and you are able to go home shortly afterwards. Having performed over 33,500 treatments since 1992, Optimax has established itself as the largest provider of laser treatment in the UK.

"It has given me new confidence in everything I do."

£395 per eye

Consultation only £25

MONTHLY PAYMENT terms available on request 25% APR

Rat: 188

Phone now for free information 0990-14 33 14

LONDON • BRISTOL • MANCHESTER • BIRMINGHAM • NEWCASTLE

CONTENTS

THE BROADSHEET

Arts 12

Business & City 17

Comment 14, 15

Features 13

Foreign News 8-11

Gazette 16

Home News 2-7

Leader and Letters 14

MEDIA+ TABLET

Appointments 8-15

Concise Crossword 18

Listings 16, 17

Media 2-7

Radio & TV 19, 20

news

significant shorts

Build more incinerators to burn cattle, councils urged

Councils are being urged by the Government to give a high priority to allowing incineration plants to be built to clear the backlog of cattle in the wake of the BSE scare.

The Department of the Environment wrote earlier this month to local authorities across England to urge them to hold early talks with interested parties over applications to build the plants.

The move comes as a mounting stockpile of meat, bonemeal and tallow builds up in cold storage facilities, the product of the slaughter scheme introduced in the aftermath of the BSE scare. Existing incineration plants have struggled to cope with the volume and with some 350,000 tonnes are already in cold storage, another 800,000 cattle are due to be slaughtered this year.

Yesterday Jack Cunningham, the agriculture Minister, said he may raise with the European Union a study which suggests that Continental countries are hugely under-reporting BSE cases.

The study, by three respected experts on animal disease, appeared to back up UK farmers' suspicions that other countries have underestimated the scale of BSE infection in their cattle.

Man arrested in lake mystery

A man was yesterday under arrest by police hunting the killer of Carol Park whose body was in Coniston Water.

Police said the man from the south Cumbria area was in custody at Barrow-in-Furness police station assisting with inquiries.

Mrs Park's body was found trussed and weighted at the bottom of the lake 11 days ago. She vanished from home at Leese, near Barrow in July, 1976.

Inquiry into drugs act



A "long overdue" inquiry into the effectiveness of the 1971 Misuse of Drugs Act was announced yesterday by an independent research charity.

The Police Foundation study will be carried out by a committee that will include Simon Jenkins, former editor of *The Times*, and leading lawyers, academics and police officers expert in drugs law.

They are expected to focus on whether the law needs to be changed in the light of a growing drugs culture and the Government's commitment to tackle drug-related crime.

Viscountess Runciman, (pictured) the committee's chairwoman, who also heads the Mental Health Commission, said the purpose was not to pave the way for the gradual decriminalisation of drugs.

McMaster investigation in private

There will be no public investigation into the death of the Paisley South MP Gordon McMaster, it was reported yesterday.

If confirmed, the decision would mean that Tommy Graham, the Renfrewshire West MP suspended last week after an internal party inquiry, would not have to give evidence on allegations made against him in his colleague's suicide note.

Mr McMaster accused both Mr Graham and Don Dixon, Labour's former deputy chief whip, of repeating untruths about him. Four other Labour Party members were suspended last week along with Mr Graham and action against irregularities in the Labour Party in the Paisley area are continuing. Fran Abrams

CND calls for nuclear flight ban

The Government today rejected a call by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament for it to stop transporting nuclear cargoes by air over England and Wales. CND claimed the flights, taking place to and from the United States, were a huge danger to the public as they went over highly populated areas.

The Ministry of Defence confirmed the flights had been taking place for many years, but said international safety standards were adhered to and no accidents had ever occurred.

Dave Knight, CND chairman, called for the flights to be stopped. "The likelihood of any type of container withstanding a plane crash is minimal," he said. "It is clearly insane to fly over large centres of population carrying any radioactive material. It is simply not worth the risk to human health."

CND said nuclear materials were flown from RAF Brize Norton in Oxfordshire over south-west England and Wales to the US.

Priest will be buried at abbey

Father Brendan Smyth, the disgraced paedophile catholic priest who died last week, is to be buried at the Irish headquarters of his Norbertine order of the priesthood.

Smyth, 69, who was jailed on both sides of the border for sex-abuse crimes against children in his care over a 35-year period, collapsed with a heart attack in the Curragh jail, Co Kildare, while taking exercise on Friday. A plot for his burial has been chosen in the grounds of the Norbertine's base at Kilmacrotty Abbey, near Ballyjamesduff, Co Cavatin.

Yard corruption inquiry

Scotland Yard has launched an investigation into allegations of corruption against serving and retired police officers after newspaper claims that officers were earning extra cash by moonlighting as private eyes.

The *Sunday Times* reported yesterday that officers were working for private security firms, helping to bug homes and run checks on people's criminal and social security records for private detectives.

Sir Paul Condon, the Metropolitan Police commissioner has approved the setting up of undercover operations to trap corrupt officers, it is claimed.

A spokeswoman for Scotland Yard said: "The Metropolitan Police is committed to tackling corruption within the service. In the past year we have allocated additional resources and taken a more pro-active approach to actively seek out corruption."

Nine share £8m

Nine winners shared the £8,114,202 jackpot in Saturday's National Lottery. They scooped £901,578 for choosing winning numbers 25, 36, 44, 47, 10, 4. The bonus ball was 29.

people



Caroline Richmond: 'It is very difficult to think of myself as a woman'

Woman wins £50,000 for unwanted hysterectomy

A woman who claimed her womb and ovaries were removed without her consent during a routine operation has received a £50,000 out of court settlement.

Caroline Richmond went into Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital, London, in 1992, for a minor gynaecological operation and woke up to find the surgeon had performed a hysterectomy.

Ms Richmond, 59, said she had not given her consent for the operation and has now received the settlement from the National Health Service Legal Authority, Ian Fergusson, the gynaecologist, and South East London Health Authority have not admitted liability.

Ms Richmond, of Putney, south London, said she was pleased with the settlement and hailed it as an important victory for women.

"This was never a money thing," she said. "I didn't want or need the operation and I did not and would not have consented to it. The operation was a terrible waste of NHS money."

"What I want is my female parts. I want to have a female body. What the surgeon did to me is a crime. Doctors would never consider removing a man's penis without asking him first."

After the operation, Ms Richmond, who has no chil-

dren, received therapy for post-traumatic stress.

"I was so traumatised I have been virtually unable to work since the operation and it has had severe effects on my private life," she said.

"I had hoped to remarry but it is very difficult to think of myself as a woman when I have got some of my vital organs missing."

Ms Richmond was admitted to Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital in April 1992 for an NHS operation to reduce heavy periods.

When she realised that the surgeon had removed her womb and ovaries, she discharged herself and complained to the police. A one-year police investigation ended without a prosecution.

Ms Richmond then sued Mr Fergusson and South East London Health Authority for negligence and battery and/or trespass against the person.

A statement from Guy's and St Thomas' said: "We deeply regret the distress suffered by Ms Richmond as a result of the hysterectomy, for which she felt she had not given permission."

"However, we understand that Mr Fergusson thought that he had Ms Richmond's consent to carry out a hysterectomy if he believed it to be in her medical interests."

Kate Watson-Smyth

Nurse's mother flies out to Saudi prison

The mother of one of the British nurses accused of murder in Saudi Arabia was flying last night to visit her daughter and "hold her".

Ann McLaughlin, 50, said she was preparing to join Sandra and Jonathan Ashbee, the sister and brother-in-law of her daughter Lucille's co-accused Deborah Parry, for the flight.

The British women could be publicly beheaded if they are found guilty of murdering their Australian colleague Yvonne Gilford last December.

Mrs McLaughlin, from Dundee, said: "I can hardly wait to see Lucille. I am so looking forward to holding her."

"We are going out there with the same message of love and support we always take with us."

She will check out speculation that the British women have already been found guilty and their case referred to a higher court.

Mrs McLaughlin (pictured) said: "When we are out there we will hopefully find out what's going on with the case against them. I can't call it a trial because there has not been one."



She said that the families were hoping to meet with the British ambassador to discuss the women's conditions in Dammam Central Prison, where they have been held since December.

A doctor visited the nurses at the request of the Foreign Office "to check that they are OK", according to British embassy spokesman Alex Brown.

The doctor "might pass the report to prison authorities if he thinks there's a case for moving them to a hospital", he added.

The judges hearing the case have adjourned to consider a verdict.

Girl, aged 5, flew packed holiday jet

A British Airways pilot and co-pilot have been suspended and could face the sack after a five-year-old girl operated the controls of a packed jet.

Holidaymakers were flying back from the south of France to Heathrow on a Boeing 757 when the toddler was allowed onto the flight deck.

She then perched on one of the pilot's knees and was allowed to press buttons on the instrument panel.

A BA spokeswoman confirmed that, following a passenger's complaint, the captain, Phil Highton, and his co-pilot were under suspension.

She said: "We have suspended them pending an investigation. We do view it as a serious breach of company regulations but it is important to stress that at no time was the safety of the passengers compromised."

A newspaper named the girl the girl as Emily Pickersgill and said she spent 20 minutes on the flight deck, at one stage pressing a button to make the plane turn.

It also said the plane was 15 minutes from Heathrow, although the BA spokeswoman said this was unlikely.

Fleetwood Mac confirm rumours of return

It is one of the most successful albums of all time, known for its tuneful yet somewhat anodyne songs. But at the time it was being recorded the atmosphere among the members of Fleetwood Mac was anything but harmonious.

Rumours was released in 1977 and is the eighth best-selling record ever. Almost an entire generation of thirtysomethings have owned a copy and its popularity endures.

However, of the five people in the band, two had just split up and were strictly on non-speaking terms and the fifth was left acting as go-between.

The history of the album is traced in a BBC documentary *Classic Albums* to be shown tonight and was the first time the group had met



up since recording *Rumours*.

Twenty years later, time has eased the bitterness and they have reformed, issued a new album called *The Dance* and are about to embark on an American tour.

Rumours saw the break-up of Christine and John McVie as well as Stevie Nicks and Lindsay Buck-

ingham. The resulting songs were all written about each other and reflect the conflicting emotions swirling around the recording studio.

Thus Buckingham wrote *Go Your Own Way* and Stevie Nicks retailed it with *Dreams*.

During the programme Mick Fleetwood talks about how he worked to keep the group together during the emotional upheaval while the others explain frankly about their inspiration.

Caroline Thomas, spokeswoman for production company Isis, said: "At the time they met for the documentary, Stevie Nicks and Lindsay Buckingham hadn't seen each other for years. We managed in a sense to put them back together again."

Kate Watson-Smyth

briefing

SPENDING

Britain lags the world in healthcare funding

Britain continues to lag behind other developed nations when it comes to spending on healthcare, figures showed yesterday.

A report to be published next month shows that total health spending in the UK was unchanged at last year at 6.8 per cent of gross domestic product.

Of this, 5.9 per cent was spent on the NHS. The proportion of income devoted to healthcare remained below the 1995 average: among countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development of 7.9 per cent.

Britain was well behind Germany, which spent 9.5 per cent of GDP on health care, and further behind the United States, where health spending accounted for 14.3 per cent.

The figures, from the independent Office of Health Economics, showed that NHS spending per head of population in the UK rose to £717 last year – an increase of 1.5 per cent on 1995.

However in the 20 years between 1976 and 1996 NHS spending per head increased by 74 per cent in real terms, while total health expenditure per head including private care rose by 86 per cent.

Despite its low expenditure, Britain health record was not unfavourable according to recognised indicators, said the OHE.

Infant mortality in the UK was average, while that of the United States was relatively high.

MEDICINE

Dancing with danger

Ballet dancers whose training programme is too tough face a higher risk of developing the crippling bone disorder osteoporosis, a study has shown. Dancers whose menstrual cycle was disrupted by weight loss and hard training were those most at risk.

In a project funded by the Action Research charity, Dr Nicola Keay examined 57 women over the age of 20 who had not yet reached the menopause, and measured the mineral bone density of their spine and pelvis.

She found that in those whose periods had stopped the spine measurements were significantly below those of other women.

But in dancers with normal periods the bone density in the hips was significantly higher than that of the general population – an apparent benefit of training.

Dr Keay, of St Thomas' Hospital, London, says: "I am not saying that these women should not carry on dancing."

"I hope our study will highlight ways of reducing the risk of stress fractures due to low bone density."

Osteoporosis affects more than three million people in Britain. It generally affects women after the menopause and can lead to painful fractures of the spine, hips and wrists.



HOUSING

Scots miss out on housing boom

Scotland is missing out on the surging housing market enjoyed by other areas of the UK, particularly the South-east of England, a report said yesterday.

During the second quarter of this year, house prices in Scotland rose by 3.2 per cent in comparison with the same period a year earlier, while prices for the UK generally went up by 6.7 per cent, said a survey from The Royal Bank of Scotland and Scottish Homes.

The price increase in Scotland for the second quarter was just 0.3 per cent higher than in the previous three months, leaving the average house priced at £57,905.

The report pointed out that UK growth was being driven by the southern regions, and that while Scottish house prices were lagging behind the UK trend, they were broadly in line with the trends in the north of England.

CONSUMERS

UK bucks world smoking trend

By 2010 smokers across the world will puff their way through nearly five trillion cigarettes a year, industry analysts claim. That represents an increase on the 4.6 trillion (4.6 million millions) smoked this year.

But in the UK the trend is in the opposite direction. The number of cigarettes smoked is expected to fall from an average of 1,217 per person to 802. It will put Britain 38th in the international smoking league-tables, according to Euromonitor.

South Korea is expected to top the league with just under 4,000 cigarettes per person followed by Hungary, Poland, Japan and Bulgaria.

China's smoking craze, page 9

ENVIRONMENT

Lorries shatter rural peace

The peace of the English countryside is in danger of being lost forever unless lorry traffic is curbed, conservationists have warned.

According to a survey by the Council for the Protection of Rural England, heavy-duty vehicles are using rural lanes for "rat-runs", damaging the countryside and disturbing residents. It added that the survey carried out on 45 lanes in England revealed walkers, cyclists and riders were being "intimidated" by lorries.

The group called on the Government and local authorities to enforce weight and speed restrictions and promote alternative freight transport. Proposals also included the creation of "tranquil areas" free from heavy traffic.

TRANSPORT

Poor vision for the road ahead

More than a million motorists are driving around unaware that their eyesight is below the minimum standard, research out yesterday has shown. Many motorists adjust their driving in line with their visual abilities – but those who do not have 10 per cent more accidents.

If drivers with poor eyesight were more aware of their limitations, death-and-injury accidents could fall by more than 900 a year, according to the research Aston University and which was sponsored by Vauxhall.

The survey, which involved questioning 8,000 drivers at Granada motorway service areas, showed that 4 per cent of drivers – about 1.2 million people – could be unaware of their poor eyesight.

A week-long road-side check run by police found one woman driver whose eyesight was so bad that they drove her home themselves because they considered her a danger on the road.

HEALTH

Hospitals 'mishandling death'

Dying NHS patients are being under-prescribed painkillers by poorly trained staff needlessly fearful of side-effects such as breathing difficulties or addiction, according to a study.

The mishandling of death extends to relatives who are left distressed by poor communication after a family member has just died.

Previous studies showed doctors were too busy to talk to bereaved relatives, but researchers from London's King's College Medical School and St Christopher's Hospice found that nurses were now also too busy.

Variations in the handling of deaths, 60 per cent of which happen in hospitals, is blamed on the lack of clear guidelines from the Department of Health.

Rory Carroll

THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

Austria	.....	£5.00
Belgium	.....	£5.00
Canada	.....	£5.00
Cyprus	.....	£5.00
Denmark	.....	£5.00
France	.....	£5.00
Germany	.....	£5.00
Greece	.....	£5.00
Ireland	.....	£5.00
Italy	.....	£5.00
Japan	.....	£5.00
Netherlands	.....	£5.00
Norway	.....	£5.00
Portugal	.....	£5.00
Spain	.....	£5.00
Sweden	.....	£5.00
Switzerland	.....	£5.00
USA	.....	£5.00

OVERSEAS SUBSCRIPTIONS

By post, 13 weeks Europe £10.76 Zone 1 (Middle East, Americas, Africa and India) £14.06 Zone 2 (Far East and Australasia) £20.70. To order, please send cheque payable to Johnstone International Media Services Ltd to 43 Millthorpe, London E14 9TF or telephone 0171-538 8388. Credit cards welcome.

BACK ISSUES

Back issues of the Independent are available from: Historic Newspapers, telephone 01988 840370.

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 43.6% of the raw material for UK newspapers in 1996

THE INDEPENDENT
online every day on AOL
Call 0800 376 5376
for FREE software - quote "Independent"

سكرا من الامم

Edinburgh Film and Television Festivals: Screen idols upstage politicians and programme makers

Quiz offers prizes to divorcees to reveal their old secrets

Paul McCann
Media Correspondent

Family values campaigners look set to be outraged by a new quiz show which will get divorcees to dish the dirt on each other in order to win foreign holidays.

London Weekend Television is developing *Can We Still Be Friends?* - a Nineties version of the Seventies quiz *Mr and Mrs*.

In the programme, which was originally to be called *The Ex-Files*, old flames and divorced couples

'It's terribly moral. We would like them to back together and even go on the holiday'

have to answer questions about each other, "with daggers drawn" according to the programme's makers.

Two ex-couples will compete against each other to answer "wicked" questions such as: "What was the name of the first woman he was unfaithful to you with?"

The ex-couple that knows most about each other's unreasonable behaviour will then go into a head-to-head final. In a cruel twist, once one of the couple wins, their former partner will get to choose the winner's prize for them. They will be able to pick for their ex a holiday in Bali, a shuttle full of coal, or a mystery prize. "It is a beautiful thing," said

Humphrey Barclay, head of comedy at LWT. But he added: "There could be an element of cruelty in this."

Both Channel 4 and ITV are interested in broadcasting the show but the level of bitterness may depend on what time it goes out. "Channel 4 is interested in a rude, bitter reunion," said Mr Barclay. "But we're wondering if it isn't a new *Blind Date* with ITV potential." If *Can We Still Be Friends?* goes to Channel 4 it will include gay and lesbian couples to give it a truly Nineties feel.

Mr Barclay denied that the programme would exploit the fact that one in three marriages in Britain end in divorce: "It's all in defence of the family," he said. "It's terribly moral, we would like them to get back together and even go on the prize holiday together."

"The aaaaaahhs from the audience will be overwhelming if the winner decides to take their former partner with them."

The programme is the idea of the stand-up comedian John Malone but LWT has yet to sign up a presenter. Mr Barclay is considering using the camp comedian and Perrier Award nominee Graham Norton who Mr Barclay said is a "brilliant ad-libbing guy".

A pilot show is planned for the Autumn and is being developed by the LWT director Crispin Leyser.

Mr Barclay believes couples will be happy to come on the show and get their skeletons out of the closet. He hopes to find what he describes as "the juicy couples you get on *Blind Date*". Although he admitted: "It's got a bit more edge than *Cilla Black*."



Royal tour: Michael Caine and Sean Connery in Edinburgh yesterday for the launch of a new print of their 1975 film *The Man Who Would Be King*. Photograph: Colin McKillop

The Hamiltons put on a show for cheap TV

Paul McCann

The disgraced former Conservative MP Neil Hamilton and his wife, Christine, have landed themselves a free stay in a five-star hotel opposite the London Ritz as part of their increasingly self-parodying efforts to become media stars.

Trading on their notoriety the two have written a review of a night they spent in the Athenaeum Hotel in London, paid for by the *Times* news-

paper. One of the gifts the former minister Mr Hamilton received from Mohamed Al Fayed, owner of Harrods, was a stay in the Paris Ritz.

Mrs Hamilton admitted that they were cashing in on the cash for questions scandal. "We are not unaware of why the *Times* asked us to do it," she said yesterday. Mr and Mrs Hamilton were appearing at the Edinburgh Television Festival where they were stars of a workshop on making cheap television programmes.

One programme-maker horrified the audience by suggesting that Mrs Hamilton could host a programme where she interviews car-crash victims at their hospital bed sides. But Mrs Hamilton was disappointed that no firm offers of work had come from their appearance. "We are game to try anything," she said. Mr and Mrs Hamilton had signed up with an agent to get them media work.

Mrs Hamilton, who during the election earned a reputation as the

stronger half of the partnership, is at present writing *Christine Hamilton's Bumper Book of British Battle-axes* in time for the Christmas market.

The Hamiltons join a long line of former Conservative MPs, including Michael Portillo, who are trying to build a career in the media.

However their performance at Edinburgh, which was filled with jokes about Mr Fayed, revealed them as an increasingly un-funny

novelty act with little understanding of their own unpopularity.

The Hamiltons' desperation for work was underlined by their willingness to appear at a television festival being sponsored by the *Guardian* newspaper, the agent of their downfall.

A festival spokeswoman emphasised that the Hamiltons had not been paid for their appearance but had merely received accommodation and travelling expenses.

'All gone': Teletubbies give up baby talk for children's sake

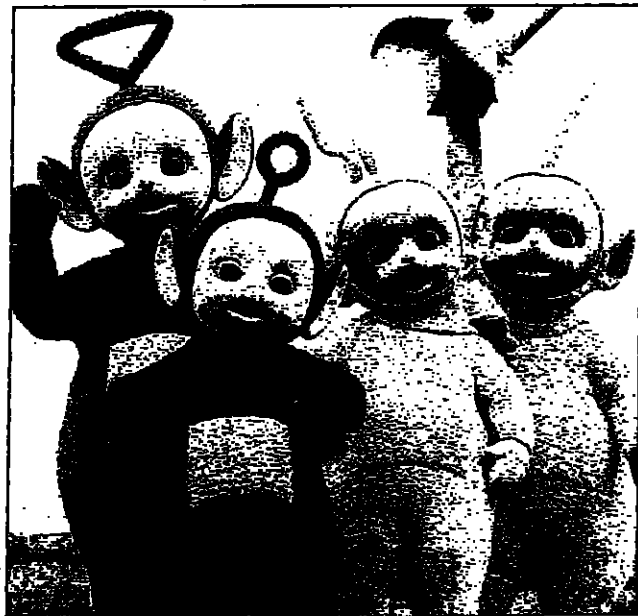
Teletubbies, the hit children's television show, is to adopt real language following complaints from parents and educationalists about the show's fat stars' baby talk, writes Paul McCann.

But Anna Home, head of BBC children's TV, denied that the character's babble, which includes the catchphrases "tubby toast", "tubby custard" and "all gone", was doing the two-year-olds who watch any harm.

"The children who grew up watching the *Changers* didn't grow up into a generation of whistlers," she told a session at the Edinburgh International Television Festival yesterday.

None the less, there will be "modifications" to the programme. "It may be that there is a need to go into more traditional speech," Ms Home said.

The makers of the programme, Ragdoll Productions, conducted research into children's language development before creating the programme. Ragdoll believes the *Teletubbies* babble is what children use to learn the rules of language before they start using real words. The programme provoked a barrage of complaints from



The Teletubbies: Top of the morning television ratings

parents worried that Tinky Winky, Laa Laa, Dipsy and Po make a bad example for children. Even so, John Morris, head of sales for the BBC's commercial arm, BBC Worldwide, said that the programme

will make the corporation a lot of money. "The potential on this one is limitless."

The programme has already been sold to Portugal, France and South Africa.

But some international pro-

gramme buyers have had a hard time understanding the characters, who have aerials on their head and TV screens in their stomachs.

Mr Morris said: "Initially, there was a great deal of surprise at the look of the programme. They were used to more traditional programmes and some of them were horrified. A German buyer said 'These are like spacemen and we think they'll frighten our children'."

In a session devoted to how children's programmes such as *The Magic Roundabout* have been adopted as cults by students and adults, the panelists discussed how *Teletubbies* have been a hit with chubbies and the gay community.

The camp, handbag carrying antics of Tinky Winky provoked Andy Medhurst, a media studies lecturer at Sussex University, to declare: "Tinky Winky is the first queer role model for toddlers."

Teletubbies is the most watched programme at the time that it is shown, with its two million viewers beating the audience for *Big Breakfast*.

Wouldn't you just hate those Spice Girls living next door?

Kathy Marks

Substantial numbers of people would relish having the Spice Girls move in next door, in spite of the risk of having fans of the pop group parked on their lawn. Many more, however, would regard the five girls as the neighbours from hell.

A survey by NatWest Mortgage Services published today reveals the schism in attitudes to the chart-topping girl group - from slavish adoration among a large chunk of under-25s to downright loathing in older members of the population.

For the survey, some 2,000 people over the age of 15 were asked who would be their ideal or most reviled neighbours. The Spice Girls came ninth in the first category, scoring 11 per

cent, but top of the second list, with 32 per cent.

To the mystification of researchers, the television presenter Jill Dando received the most votes (20 per cent) as the person with whom to exchange gossip over the garden fence. (No doubt they questioned disproportionate numbers of middle-aged men.)

Ms Dando shares joint first place with Des Lynam, the television sports anchorman. Close behind are two men separated by age but united by dreamy good looks: tennis player Tim Henman and film star George Clooney (18 and 16 per cent respectively).

Also featuring in the top 10 of "des residents", as NatWest calls them, are television personalities Anthea Turner (bland

blonde looks similar to Ms Dando's), Anne Robinson (dominatrix sex appeal) and Chris Evans (possibly confused with someone else).

Evans, more predictably, is number five in the "nightmare neighbours" list, which also includes the first couple of showbiz, Liam Gallagher and Patsy Kensit, and Jeremy Beadle (31 per cent would slash their wrists if he moved in next door).

Fictional characters figured prominently as unpopular neighbours. Thirty per cent of respondents in the survey nominated the Battersbys, the problem family that recently moved into Coronation Street; other choices were Wayne and Wayneta Slob, Harry Enfield's fag-smoking creations, Victor Meldrew of *One Foot In The*

Grave and Dot Cotton of *East-Enders*.

The findings gives the lie to the popular perception of neighbours as folk who keep themselves to themselves. It reveals that 92 per cent of people talk to their neighbours at least once a week and 44 per cent speak to them daily.

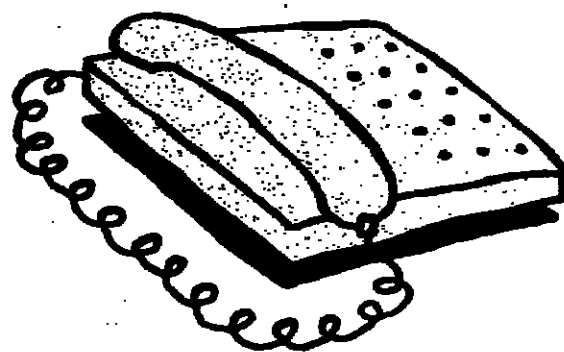
When asked what they hated most about the family next door, loud music, late-night parties and unruly children were principal provocations. Garden gnomes, noisy lovemaking and "lowering the tone of the neighbourhood" were also cited.

Qualities valued in neighbours included help with do-it-yourself and decorating, babysitting, "having me round for dinner/barbecues" and "keeping me up to date with gossip".

MERCURY COMMUNICATIONS

CABLE & WIRELESS

OH TO BE IN ENGLAND
NOW THAT MERCURY IS OFFERING
GUARANTEED SAVINGS
ON YOUR CALL BILLS OR DOUBLE
YOUR MONEY BACK.



Or Scotland or Wales or Northern Ireland. Anywhere in the UK. Because, with Mercury UK-Call you can save up to 33% on your UK long distance calls against BT. In fact, we're so confident that you'll save money on your call bill with Mercury (even against PremierLine

and Friends and Family), that if you don't, we'll refund double the difference. For details call the number below. Today.

Mercury UK-Call
FreeCall 0500 500 366

Prices and savings correct at 30/06/1997, compared against BT's basic rates, for calls of 3 minutes. Savings available for a quarterly fee of £3.75 (inc. VAT). Prior Pledge terms apply against BT's basic rates and discount schemes, excluding line rental and temporary promotional offers. Not available on Calling Card or business packages.

news

Sinn Fein sure that Blair will talk with Adams

Kathy Marks

Despite Downing Street denials, Sinn Féin said last night it was confident that a face-to-face meeting would take place in the next few weeks between its president, Gerry Adams, and Tony Blair, the Prime Minister.

With the Government expected to announce this week that Sinn Féin will be admitted to all-party talks on the future of Northern Ireland next month, a senior member of the party said that its inclusion in the negotiations would make an encounter inevitable. "Once we enter the talks, we will have to be included in any round of prime ministerial meetings," he said. "I trust Tony Blair will want to keep abreast with what we are thinking, and it's my understanding that he will instigate a meeting."

Mr Blair's aides yesterday played down weekend reports that a meeting between the two men was imminent. One report suggested that it could take place at Stormont

rather than Downing Street, to minimise any potential embarrassment.

Ms Mowlam, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, is expected to confirm at the end of the week that the IRA's latest ceasefire has been sufficiently well observed to permit Sinn Féin's presence at the talks, which start formally on 6 September. The Government set a six-week "quarantine period" after the IRA called the ceasefire on 19 July, which it said would be used to assess whether the new peace was "genuine in word and deed". That period will be over next weekend, but Ms Mowlam's announcement is anticipated on Thursday or Friday.

Ms Mowlam's assessment of how well the ceasefire has been observed will be based not only on the lack of any "spectacular" terrorist attacks, but also on army and security briefings about weapons movements and the numbers of punishment beatings and sectarian incidents that have taken place.

The Sinn Féin source denied re-

ports that a meeting had already been arranged between Mr Adams and Mr Blair, but said that the party was "pushing for a meeting as soon as possible". There was no suggestion yet as to where it might take place, he said. "It doesn't matter to us where we meet as long as it is for substantive discussions," he said, adding: "We won't take part in any surreptitious meetings or anything that is contrived. If and when Gerry Adams meets Mr Blair, it will be for substantive talks."

The first political session of the Stormont talks is scheduled for 15 September. There is still uncertainty about who will chair the committee to oversee arms decommissioning in the province. The Ulster Unionists accused the Irish Government at the weekend of seeking to block the appointment of the favoured candidate, Canadian general John de Chastelain, because of his tough line on decommissioning. The issue may be resolved at a meeting between Ms Mowlam and the Irish foreign minister, Ray Burke, tomorrow.



Follow the drums: Members of the French-Brazilian Bat-ta band arrive by Tube for the 32nd Notting Hill Carnival yesterday in west London. Later, a man was shot in the stomach, marring celebrations. Police said his wounds were 'not serious' Photograph: Andrew Burnham

Ford
21 years as the
nation's favourite
Thanks!

CARAVANS

IT'S IN FULL SWING and there are still plenty of attractions

Escort Silhouette 3dr
£10,595
on the road

- Power assisted steering
- Sunroof • Metallic paint
- Stereo radio/cassette
- Body coloured bumpers

• 5dr and Estate £10,995



Escort Chicane 3dr
£11,495
on the road

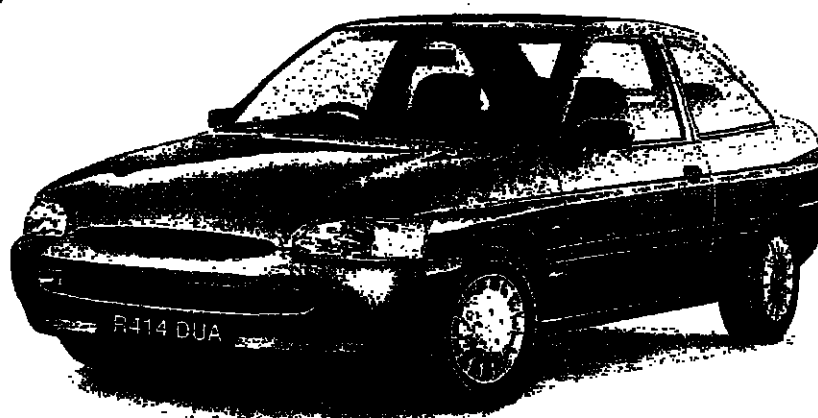
- Power assisted steering
- Electric front windows
- Tailgate spoiler • Sunroof
- Metallic paint • Alloy wheels

• 5dr and Estate £11,995

Escort Flight 3dr
£11,495
on the road

- Power assisted steering
- Electric front windows
- Sunroof • Metallic paint
- Central double locking
- Passenger airbag

• 4dr, 5dr and Estate £11,995



Plus 0% finance* and free insurance† on all Escorts

Carnival must end August 31st, so visit your local Dealer now

FORD DEALERS



Mawhinney enters world of darkness

Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

It must be every Liberal Democrat's worst nightmare: the Prince of Darkness meets the Chicken Chairman.

Peter Mandelson, the man who masterminded Labour's election victory, is sharing an office during Parliament's summer break with Brian Mawhinney, who oversaw the Conservatives' road to disaster.

The former Tory chairman, who earned his nickname after abandoning his Peterborough seat for the safer shores of North West Cambridgeshire, has been moved into a House of Commons committee room while building work takes place in his office.

Unfortunately for all concerned, the same fate has befallen the minister without portfolio. Mr Mandelson, known as the Prince of Darkness because of his machiavellian tendencies and because of the description of him by Clare Short, now Secretary of State for International Development, as one of the "people that live in the dark", has had his name posted outside the same door.

While some Labour ministers appear to have insisted on billeting down together during the upheaval, Dr Mawhinney appears to be less fastidious about the company he keeps. As well as Mr Mandelson, the Tory spokesman on home affairs, is also sharing with the minister for employment and disability rights, Andrew Smith. Other

Tories currently based in committee room 19 include the party's heritage spokesman, Patrick Nicholls, the shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury David Heathcoat-Amory and the MP for Windsor, Michael Trend.

Next door in committee room 18, however, peace and harmony reigns. The health minister Tessa Jowell is sharing with the industry minister John Birt, the film and tourism minister Tom Clarke and the agriculture minister Jeff Rooker. Even further down the corridor the Paymaster General, Geoffrey Robinson, is working alone although space is set aside for other Labour members.

Most of the uprooted ministers and Tory spokespeople appeared to be away on holiday last week, however. And sadly it is unlikely that Dr Mawhinney and Mr Mandelson will ever get the opportunity to flick paper pellets at each other across their shared office space.

A spokesman for Mr Mandelson said he spent much of his time in the Cabinet Office, although he could not take constituency work there. And by the time Dr Mawhinney returns from his holiday in early September the minister without portfolio will have gone away on his.

Ministers with departments to go to were lucky in having a wider choice of offices than their shadows. Mr Mandelson's spokesman pointed out: "I do hope Mr Mawhinney is getting used to spending time in the House of Commons again," he said.

DAILY POEM

Convoy

By Charles Causley

Draw the blanket of ocean
Over the frozen face.
He lies, his eyes quivered by glittering fish,
Staring through the green freezing sea-glass
At the Northern Lights.

He is now a child in the land of Christmas:
Watching, amazed, the white tumbling bears
And the diving seal.
The iron wind clangs round the ice-caps.
The five-pointed Dog-star
Burns over the silent sea.

And the three ships
Come sailing in.

This week's Daily Poems celebrate the 80th birthday of the Cornish poet Charles Causley. After wartime service in the Royal Navy, he returned to Launceston, where he has lived, taught in primary schools, and written ever since. Charles Causley's *Collected Poems 1941-1997* are published by Macmillan (£20) and his *Selected Poems for Children* by Macmillan Children's Books (£5.99).

Seafood and Fish Restaurant

in Fulham Road

Typical French restaurant which serves beautiful seafood platters and a selection of 20 fish dishes, definitely to be tried.

Le Provençal restaurant. Chef Proprietor J.C. Thibaud.
222 Fulham Road, London SW10.
Telephone 0171 349 8848

هكذا من الامم

Right, you lovely little man ... sergeant majors on charm offensive

"You blokes are rubbish, physically! Rubbish! I will wipe the floor with any one of you! You are shit! If you think you're going to be on a passing-out parade next week with your girlfriend looking at you ... [the next bit is not printable] You have got another think coming, gentlemen!"

Twenty years on, I remember it well. We had been at Sandhurst for six months and were already commissioned as second lieutenants in "P" Company, the Paras' selection course which is to basic army training what a postgraduate degree is to a GCSE - the lowest grade of officer life - on probation at Sandhurst.

The test was mental, as well as physical. Diplomacy, cunning, survival. It was January 1977, the hardest winter in 30 years in the Brecon Beacons, and we had been in the field for 10 days on the final exercise. A couple of guys had already gone down with exposure. One of our number, a Royal Engineer and a rower took the bait the staff sergeant offered. "I'll race you, staff", he said. "And I bet you 10 quid I win".

Some time later, each carrying the same amount of equipment, machine guns and 200 rounds of ammunition, they disappeared up the snowy trail.

Hours later, Ian came back. "I won". That evening, steaming and smelly, tucking into our food in the canteen at Sennybridge, the staff sergeant approached our table: "Here's that 10 quid I owe you."

That was Sandhurst. You expect that as a soldier in 11 weeks of basic training. You expect that as an officer cadet beginning 15 months' training, though I am told it is all much more "grown up" now. We got it, from instructors who were technically our subordinates. The instructors were supposed to be "firm but tactful". Can you imagine what some soldier recruits go through?

The Army will this week launch a



The Army is short of recruits - 5,000 under strength. This week it will launch a new drive to attract and keep its troops. Instructors have been ordered to adopt a less "hectoring" approach. Christopher Bellamy, Defence Correspondent, recalls some harsh moments from his training days at Sandhurst

new drive. It is short of recruits, about 5,000 under strength, and wants to try to keep the people it gets. Instructors have been ordered to adopt a less "hectoring" approach. But Brigadier Andrew Cumming, the Army's Director of Recruiting, who commanded the first British United Nations forces in Bosnia, said "we are not going to lower our standards. We are merely going to build them up more gently".

The Army's new policy will be explained on Wednesday at the launch of the newly amalgamated Army Training and Recruitment Agency (ATRA) commanded by Major General Christopher Elliott. As if to underline its efforts to overcome the

problem, the launch will be at Pirbright, near Aldershot in Surrey, one of the Army's five training regiments. Pirbright used to be the Guards' training depot with a reputation for extreme toughness. In the Seventies, a visiting team of United States Marines was invited to go over the Guards' depot assault course but refused - because it was "too dangerous".

Since then, the Army, like the other services, has adapted to changed social conditions. But, Brig Cumming said, "a few of the instructors still worry me. They need to better understand how you control a mixed-gender, mixed race bunch of kids. It doesn't take much for one person to bring the most awful brown stuff on the Army".

The new approach will allow soldiers to be trained at their own speed. But the Army also has to adjust its psychological approach to cope with recruits, some of whom have good academic qualifications and have never failed anything or been told what to do.

"The approach now will be more 'follow me' rather than 'do this because I say so'," Brig Cumming said.

Last year, the Army introduced "pre-training" to bring recruits up to the level of fitness needed to survive the basic course and extended the latter from 10 to 11 weeks. Before that, only 60 per cent of recruits were passing the course first time, and 25 per cent were lost to the Army altogether. Since pre-training began, wastage has fallen to 17 per cent.

The British Army's approach relies heavily on robust humour. Twenty years ago, one recruit was pushing hard at a door marked "pull".

"P-U-L-L, sir," said the sergeant-major, with a contemptuous smile.

"Don't tell me," he continued.

"You must be one of the graduate entrants."



Full volume: Melvyn Hayes (front) and Windsor Davies starring in the television comedy series *Ain't Half Hot, Mum*, a portrayal of military life which the Army would like to forget

Skin cancer experts row over causes

Rory Carroll

Doctors warned the public yesterday to ignore claims from two skin-cancer experts that there were no research links between malignant melanoma and exposure to sunlight.

People should continue to use sun-cream and cover up to avoid potentially fatal skin diseases, despite the latest findings, said cancer specialists. They called on Sam Shuster and Jonathan Rees, professors of dermatology at Newcastle University, to justify their statements that some doctors and sun-cream manufacturers have exaggerated the link.

The claim was based on analysis of data published around the world which showed that growths often occurred on parts of the body that receive little or no sun, such as backs of legs or soles of feet. Professor Shuster and Professor Rees also said there was evidence that risk of the disease was inherited and that it occurred in countries where sunbathing was not popular.

Such claims were reckless and should be disregarded unless they could be proven, said Mark Rose, who treats skin cancer patients at Sydney's Royal North Shore Hospital. "The link between the Sun and skin cancer has been known for many years. It's been proven." Australia, where 5,000 people a year develop the disease and nearly 1,000 die, has led the world in skin-cancer awareness.

Tony Quinn, consultant dermatologist at London's St Bartholomew's Hospital and skin-cancer researcher for the Imperial Cancer Research Fund, said the link between melanoma and sunshine was complicated, but not in doubt.

"This publicity is unfortunate, because people might get confused. They should not stop the good habits of covering themselves up and using sun-cream."

PRINTING COMPUTING COPYING INNOVATING FAXING

With
Canon
you can make
any room
a dark
room

Whether you live in a glass house or a brick house, you can now develop your own photos. Just input your snaps from your Canon PowerShot 350 digital camera into your

computer. It stores up to 50 on a re-usable memory card.

Once you've picked, cropped or enlarged, the ones you want, simply output them on your

printer (like the BJC-4200 shown here) for instant colour

prints. Isn't it time BJC-4200 & PowerShot 350

you developed an interest in

Canon digital photography?

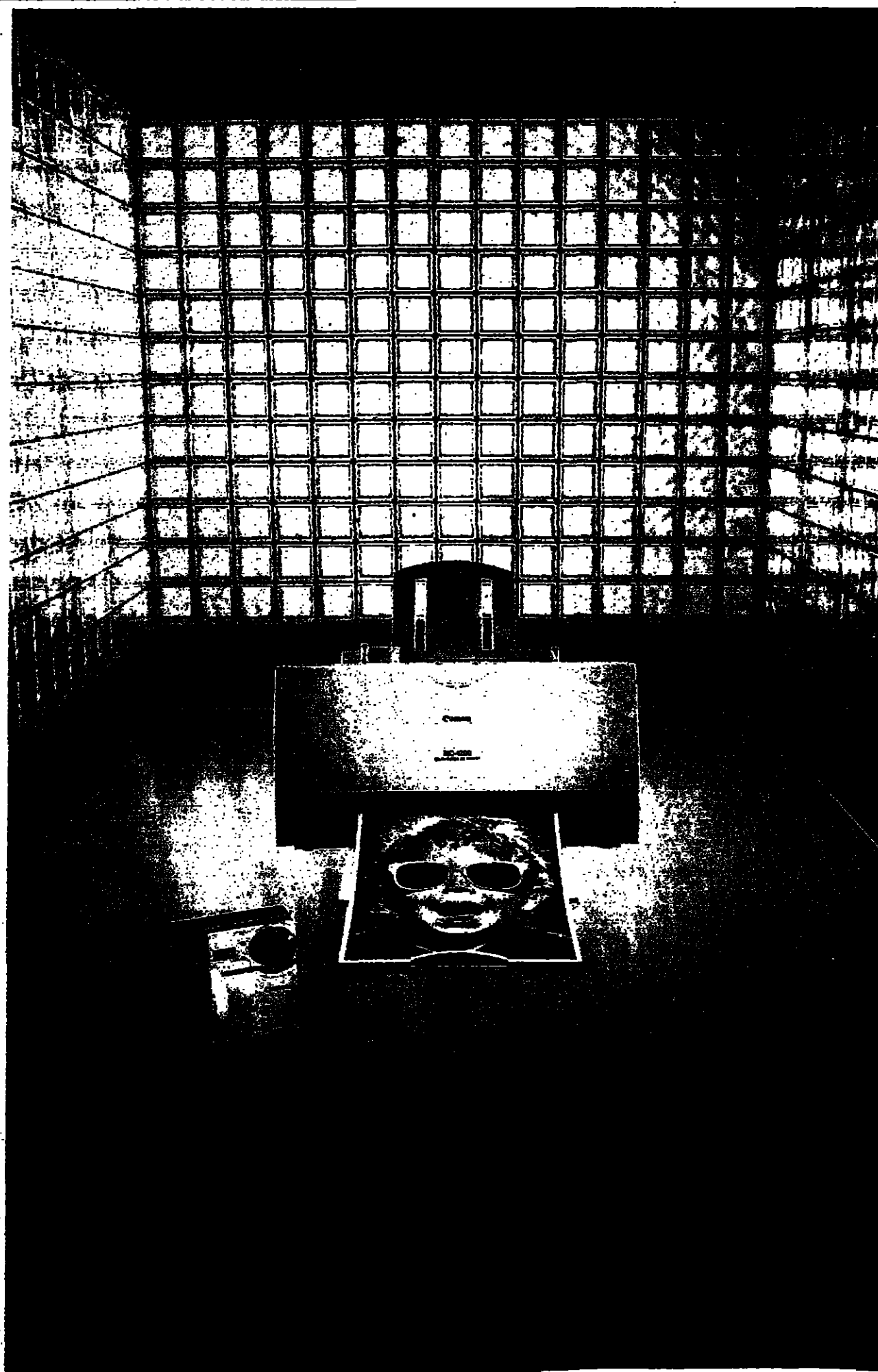
YOU AND CANON CAN.

For more information call

freephone 0500 246 246.

www.canon.co.uk

Canon



news

Police put the brakes on new breed of old biker

Steve Boggan

Police have launched a campaign to save the lives of a new and potentially deadly breed of motorcyclist – not reckless youths but affluent middle-aged men on expensive superbikes.

Road safety experts are growing increasingly concerned by the emergence of what they call the "born-again bikers", older men whose children have grown up and well-off professionals looking for thrills.

Insurers have also identified the group and believe many

once rode motorbikes and are returning after raising families. Others simply believe riding fast bikes is cool.

The trend was first spotted by Chief Inspector David Short of North Yorkshire traffic police. In his area, which is largely rural and criss-crossed with long country lanes where bikers race, there were 13 motorcycle deaths in 1995, three of which involved over-thirties. Last year, there were 17 deaths, 12 involving over-thirties. So far this year, there have been eight fatalities, seven of which involved over-thirties.

"In North Yorkshire, 90 per cent of fatal motorcycle accidents now involve bikers aged over 30 riding high-performance bikes," said Chief Inspector Short. "Many of them used to

ride bikes years ago but they don't seem to realise that bikes have advanced so much over the past 20 years that today's machines bear little resemblance to what they were used to.

"They return to biking with a little more money in their pockets and buy bikes that are actually very similar to performance bikes used in racing. They simply go too fast, lose control and hit something."

A top of the range high-performance bike costs around £10,000 – half the price of a sports car. Last month, Mr Short and representatives of 11 forces nationwide got together to

launch Bikesafe 2000, a campaign which aims to educate born-again bikers using a network of dealers, police specialists and bike clubs.

Tim Thompson, editor of *Ride* magazine, is supporting the initiative. Readership research has shown the average age of his readers to be increasing and readers' average wages have now topped £30,000 a year. "We take readers away for weekends and it has been in-

teresting to see the ages increase," said Mr Thompson. "You see these guys in leathers and then you realise there's a bit of a paunch under there. And then they take their crash helmets off and they're balding."

"The problem is that many of them have come back to bikes after driving cars and they 'drive' their bikes rather than riding them. There's a subtle difference but it's about understanding your bike's capa-

Vroom service: Many middle-aged men are taking to two wheels again without realising the dangers of today's high-performance superbikes. Deaths involving the over-thirties are on the increase. Photograph: Justin Slee/Getty Images

abilities and limitations. We're advocating some advanced riding lessons – one or two days close instruction can make all the difference. This isn't a problem – fatalities are very rare. And it can be great fun."

However, the trend is likely to result in increased insurance premiums for older bikers. Damian Keeling, managing director of Carole Nash insurance, Britain's largest intermediate insurer for bikers, said the days of lower premiums for mature people are numbered.

"We have 60,000 clients and our research has shown that bikers in the age group 30-60 are twice as likely to have an accident than bikers under 30," said Mr Keeling.

"In terms of life insurance and property insurance, the older age group is ideal and attracts bigger discounts and lower premiums."

"But as far as insurance goes to ride bikes, the assumption that more mature people are safer is having to be rethought and premiums are bound to rise as a result."

Airlines squeeze travellers as high-flying young Britons grow too tall for their seats

Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

Air travel is becoming an increasingly cramped experience for young Britons, according to figures published today. Ministers are being asked to review regulations on the space between aeroplane seats because a tenth of 16-34 year-old men are now officially too big to fit into them comfortably.

As thousands of holiday-makers head for the sun on the busiest weekend of the year for airports, David Chidgey, the Liberal Democrats' trade and industry spokesman, has revealed that the average male has grown by three quarters of an inch since the rules were drawn up. People travelling on char-

ter flights are squeezed hardest by the change; many larger airlines leave more than the minimum space.

While the national average height used to be five feet eight and a half inches, it is now more than five feet nine inches. This has meant increasing discomfort and even a safety risk for anyone over six feet tall.

The regulations governing the amount of space per passenger were drawn up in 1989 by the Civil Aviation Authority but are believed to have been based on a height survey carried out in 1980.

They were designed to ensure that all but the tallest five per cent of men could sit on planes without having their knees rammed into the back

of the person in front. But young men are growing ever taller, and twice as many under-35s are now too big for their seats.

Mr Chidgey, who has received representations from some of his taller constituents on the subject, has launched what he describes as "a crusade on behalf of the squeezed and squashed air passengers of Britain".

He says that passengers who are of more than the regulation height could be at greater risk than their neighbours in an accident because they might find it difficult to get out of the plane in an evacuation.

"The Government must respond to these shocking revelations with an urgent review of

the seat size regulations. Until they do Britain's taller jet-setters will not be able to rest easily in their airline seats," he said.

Mr Chidgey, the member for Eastleigh, has written to the transport minister Glenda Jackson to ask her to review the basis of the regulations. However, she has already indicated in a parliamentary answer that she is unlikely to do so.

"There is no reason why an individual who falls outside the range used by the Civil Aviation Authority should be at greater risk during an emergency evacuation. There has been no significant change in the data since 1989 and the CAA have no proposals to review this standard," she said.

Jet alert brings holiday chaos

Thousands of bank-holiday travellers faced chaos at Gatwick yesterday when a jet carrying 183 British tourists was forced to make an emergency landing.

The Airbus Boeing 757 was 50 minutes into its flight to Palma, Majorca, when a warning light flashed on the flight deck. The pilot alerted the passengers and eight crew he was returning to Gatwick and requested an emergency landing.

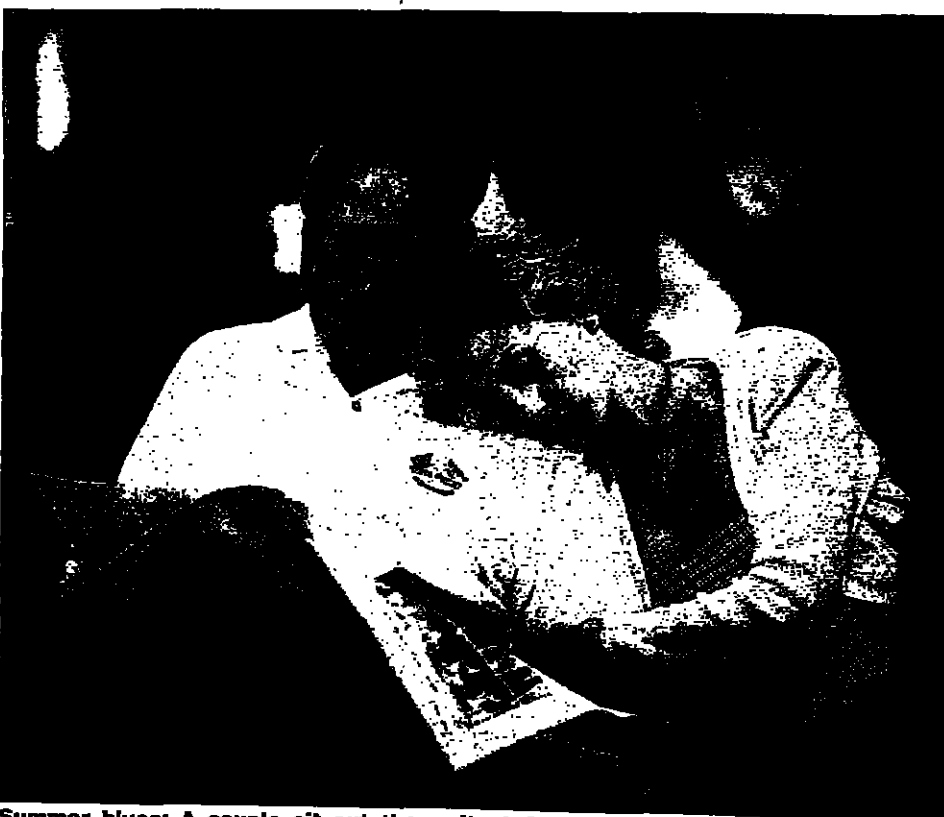
Flights were suspended for nearly one hour while fire, ambulance and police crews prepared for an emergency.

A Gatwick airport spokeswoman said the plane landed on grass beside the main runway and all passengers evacuated on the aircraft's inflatable chutes.

"The aircraft landed safely and none of the passengers or crew were injured," she said.

The spokeswoman said the airport was starting to get back to normal after the incident at 7.15pm. She said the emergency had struck at "possibly the busiest weekend of the year".

"We are trying to get every-



Summer blues: A couple sit out the wait at Gatwick yesterday when flights were halted after an emergency landing. Photograph: Andrew Bauman

body away on their holidays but obviously there have been a great number of delays."

A spokesman for Airtours said the aircraft's cockpit warning light indicated that there was a potential problem with the aircraft's hydraulics, which control the wheels and the steering. Meanwhile, a woman was

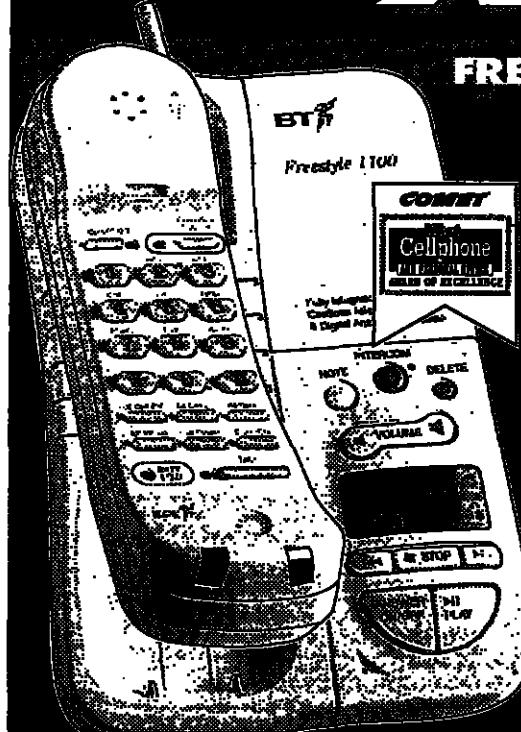
airlifted to hospital yesterday after being seriously injured when a spiked barrier was blown into the side of a Range Rover by a gust of wind.

The woman was with her husband on Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire, visiting tank ranges open to the public over the Bank Holiday weekend. The

husband was negotiating the barrier when it was blown shut. A spike penetrated the vehicle's side, injuring his wife in the buttocks and leg.

Firecrew cut her free and she was flown to Salisbury District Hospital where her injuries were described as "serious, but not life-threatening".

COMET SALE XTRA



FREEDOM TO TALK

This cordless phone allows you the freedom to move about your house and garden. It also has a digital answering machine which needs no tapes, and gives you easier access to your messages. All of which makes keeping in touch that much easier.

BT CORDLESS TELEPHONE WITH DIGITAL ANSWERING MACHINE
"Features meet the needs of the home or office"

WHAT CELLPHONE AND PERSONAL OFFICE AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

- Intercom facility
- 2 channel automatic selection
- Day and time stamp
- Call counter

Model FREESTYLE 1100 was £129.99

SALE £119.99 SAVE £10

CRYSTAL CLEAR CALLS

This DECT phone (Digital Enhanced Cordless Telecommunications), brings you the latest in cordless phone technology. It combines 120 channels with a 300 metre range, giving you an amazingly clear reception even at a long distance from the base unit.

BT DIGITAL CORDLESS TELEPHONE

- Digital speech quality and security
 - Paging facility
 - Up to 300 metres range
 - 10 number memory
 - Call timer
- Model DIVERSE 1010 was £199.99

SALE XTRA £179.99 SAVE £20

Add up to 5 additional BT digital cordless handsets for only £39.99 each*
*no telephone sockets required

COMET OPEN TODAY 10AM-6PM

STORES IN SCOTLAND OPEN AS NORMAL 10AM-6PM. CALL FREE ON 0800 414 525 FOR LOCAL STORE DETAILS

ANSWERING MACHINE

With remote access

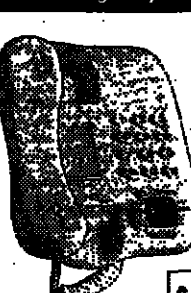


- Remote access – allows you to check messages from another phone
 - Call screening
 - Micro cassette technology
 - Message indicator
- Model RESPONSE 6

£29.99 NEW

TELEPHONE ANSWERING MACHINE

For digitally recorded messages



- Digital answering machine – requires no tapes
 - 10 memories
 - Security button
 - Remote access
 - Pre-set greeting messages
- Model RESPONSE 130

£69.99 NEW

CORDLESS TELEPHONE

With paging facility

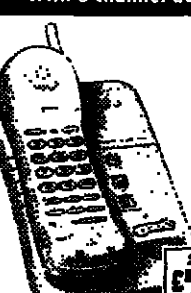


- Paging facility – for easy location of handset
 - Channel automatic selection for clearer calls
 - Last number redial
 - 10 memories
 - Wall mountable
- Model FREESTYLE 80 was £74.99

SALE £69.99 SAVE £5

CORDLESS TELEPHONE

With 8 channel automatic selection



- 8 channel automatic selection for clearer calls
 - Intercom facility
 - 10 memories
 - Security button
 - Last number redial
 - Wall mountable
- Model FREESTYLE 120 was £84.99

SALE £79.99 SAVE £5

CORDLESS TELEPHONE

With digital answering machine



- Digital answering machine – requires no tapes
 - 8 channel automatic selection for clearer calls
 - Date and time stamp
 - Call counter
- Model FREESTYLE 1500

£149.99 INTERCOM FACILITY

PLAIN PAPER FAX

With automatic fax/phone switch



- Automatic fax/phone switch
 - Intercom facility
 - 10 memories
 - Security button
 - Last number redial
 - Wall mountable
- Model DIVERSE 350 was £299.99

SALE £349.99 SAVE £50

COMET PRICE PROMISE
If you buy any product from us, then within 14 days find the same offer on sale locally at a lower price, we'll willingly refund the difference, PLUS 5% OF THAT DIFFERENCE. Ask in store for full details.

INDEPENDENT ADVICE
To help you make the right choice, Comet have invited What Callphone and Personal Office Magazine to independently review products and recommend the best buys. Look out for symbols on our pages and in stores.

Renewing your home insurance in August or September and want to save money?

If you are 50 or over call free!

0800 414 525 quoting reference ID8705

Lines open Monday to Friday 9.30am - 7pm. Saturdays 9am - 1pm.

*Top Insurance Services would like to reward you with a discount on your next policy. See details in other SAGA magazine for the policy.

SAGA INSURANCE SERVICES

NO CLAIM? YOU GAIN.

Discover private health cover with up to 50% no-claims discount.

Prime Health

A member of the Standard Life Group

Call NOW 0800 77 99 55

quoting reference 06077480

سكنا من الاربعين



Fur files: Even the cat is not spared the daily violence recorded in Richard Billingham's brutally honest snapshots of family life

It's a very intrusive view of a very raw life. When you look at them it's breathtaking – you think, how could anyone compile such a record?



Soft side: Liz Billingham feeds a newly-born kitten

Son's stark portrait of a family at war

Jojo Moyes

As a set of family snapshots, they reveal a slice of family life that is less than idyllic. But then Richard Billingham's photographs of his mother, father and brother at home are not ordinary snapshots.

Scenes from his dysfunctional family life include his tattooed mother beating up his father, his father, a chronic alcoholic, falling off a chair and passed out holding a filthy toilet. In one picture even the family cat and dog are fighting.

It is unlikely that the Royal Academy of Arts in Piccadilly, central London, has ever shown such scenes of squalor and brutality before. Or a Sparrow pie. But the photographs will form one of the highlights of the RA's "Sensation" exhibition, which opens next month.

The photographs, like the rest of the exhibits, are owned by Charles

Saatchi. All the pieces from his collection are by young British artists who, according to the RA, highlight "the vitality and inventiveness of current British art".

Jenny Blyth, curator of the Saatchi Gallery, says that the photographs are astonishing. "It's a very intrusive view of a very raw life. When you look at them it's breathtaking – you think, how could anyone compile such a record?" she said.

Billingham's photographs indeed comprise an extraordinary family record. His father, Ray, rarely leaves the house, but drinks "home brew", made by a friend in a neighbouring tower block.

At one point, according to Billingham, his father kept the home-brew bucket by the bed for convenience and drank it from a plastic jug.

His mother, Liz, rarely drinks "but she does smoke a lot of ciga-

rettes". In the pictures, her tattooed arms, and often violent posturing make her an intimidating presence.

But in one picture she beams with happiness while feeding a tiny kitten with a pipette.

The family's flat is pictured with brutal honesty – complete with filthy floors and half-eaten food, and the remaining impression is one of horror, squalor, but also occasional compassion.

It is hard to imagine that the family enjoy being portrayed in this manner. But Richard Billingham, 27, says that both his parents and his brother are "very happy" with the photographs.

"Neither I nor they are shocked by its directness because we're all well-enough acquainted with having to live with poverty. After all, there are millions of other people in Britain living similarly," he writes,

in an accompaniment to the photographs. "It is certainly not my intention to shock, to offend, sensationalise, be political or whatever."

Billingham began using his camera to compile reference material for paintings, while he was still living at home. At first, he said, he did not want to let on to the other students who his subjects were, because of the difference in their backgrounds.

Finally telling students and tutors who the pictures were of, he said, was "a load off me", and since then he has been taking pictures of them not just as reference but as an attempt to understand his family.

"Sensation" will be shown at the Royal Academy from 18 September. The exhibition will feature work by 40 artists, including Rachel Whiteread, Damien Hirst, Tracey Emin and Jake and Dinos Chapman.



Unholy matrimony: Liz attacks Ray in the flat which Richard shows in all its squalor

LAI D BACK.

You will be, when you discover a sporty hatchback has fog lamps, alloys and spoiler for a mere...

international

Island declares 'war' on Britain

Clare Short's latest comments have further infuriated the inhabitants of Montserrat

Phil Davison
Woodlands

The mouse is roaring. The remaining people of the volcano-stricken British colony of Montserrat declared "war" on the British government yesterday and said they would refuse to leave their beloved Caribbean island despite British pressure to do so.

They formed an emergency national consultative forum - including the local cabinet, newspaper editors, civil servants, private and public sector representatives and others - to fight for their cause.

It is a diplomatic war. Montserratians are a peaceful people. But they are determined not to leave the little island, 27 miles west of Antigua. They made their point at the weekend when only 16 of the remaining 4,000 islanders showed up for a British-planned "voluntary evacuation" to Antigua. It took a British navy destroyer and 250 naval personnel - watched by 100 journalists - to ensure they left safely. And most of the "evacuees" said they were only going to visit relatives in England and would be back.

Before the Soufriere Hills volcano first erupted in 1995, there were 11,000 people on the island. At least 3,000 have moved to Britain, others to neighbouring islands.

New local Chief (Prime) Minister David Brandt said the British government was "forcing us to choose between misery and the unknown".

"Effectively, we are at war with the British government. Not with the British people. Britons understand our cause. They know what it would feel like to be forced to leave the British Isles," a senior government official told *The Independent*.

"Their own scientists say the north of the island is safe. But they're forcing us to leave. We have a message for Clare Short [Secretary of State for International Development]: 'We ain't going, no way.'"

He was quoting from a calypso song by local star Arrow, who will sing along with Eric Clapton, Sting, Paul McCartney at a Montserrat aid concert in London on 15 September.



On their way: Crew members from HMS *Liverpool* assisting the Healy family of Salem with their luggage at the British registration centre on Montserrat

Photograph: Reuters

island could be engulfed by a major eruption. That, according to Professor Sparks, was a chance in many thousands.

Another statement by Ms Short, suggesting that Montserratians were "wanting golden elephants next", bought the response: "All we are asking for is to keep our mountain chickens." That is what they call the large frogs that roam the lush hills and are a local delicacy.

After the devastation of Plymouth, and the threat of further eruptions, the 4,000 remaining Montserratians are confined to a northern "safe zone", and are wondering why Britain is not fulfilling its promise to develop the area.

"They [the Montserratian local government] said we must spend money on Montserrat. I disagree with that," Ms Short said at the weekend. Her International Development Ministry has admitted that redevelopment funds have been re-directed towards an evacuation, even though few seem keen to evacuate. Representatives of the US construction firm Brown and Root say they have been told to suspend plans to build houses in the north.

Barclays Bank, one of two international banks still on the island, pulled out last week and the island's major UK-based insurance companies said they would cancel all policies this week. "How can we live here with no banks, no insurance, no shops, no homes?" said Sgt Kenneth Winespear, the island's chief immigration officer, who said he would probably leave. The island's only dentist left at the weekend, one of the two remaining pharmacies said it was going and Britain is closing down the one remaining hospital.

While the Government appears bent on shutting the island down, international developers are eyeing Montserrat with a view to the time the volcano goes back to sleep. According to one visiting foreign consultant, "there are engineering solutions to this. You could build berms (land heaps) or dykes to divert any volcanic flow."

It has become clear to Montserratians that the British government wants them to leave the island despite scientists' claims that the Government has misread scientific reports and is grossly exaggerating the volcano's danger.

In recent interviews, Ms Short has called Montserratian leaders "irresponsible" and their requests for evacuation compensation "ludicrous". Islanders were stunned at the weekend to hear her compare their plight with that of flood victims in Wales.

In an interview with *The Independent* yesterday, new Chief Minister David Brandt slammed Ms Short and challenged her to see the situation for

herself. "She is refusing to come. I wonder if she can bear what she will see," he said. Ms Short said she would not come here and that her deputy, George Foulkes - who helped spark the latest crisis by talking of a possible "cataclysmic" eruption threatening the whole island - may cancel a planned visit later this week.

"Britain's own scientists say the north of the island is safe," said Mr Brandt, sworn in by British governor Frank Savage on Friday after street protests forced the resignation of his predecessor, Bertrand Osborne.

"When it came to the Falklands, it was not a matter of per capita," he added, referring to Ms Short's proposal to link evacuation compensation with the local average wage.

"All we are asking for is a chance to rebuild our lives. The British government is not giving us that chance."

Publicly, Britain says it will help rebuild Montserrat, constructing a new capital city in the northern "safe zone" to replace Plymouth, largely burnt out and buried in volcanic ash. In reality, the Government has frozen such development and is encouraging islanders to leave.

"After World War Two, America rebuilt Europe from the ashes, even though it had no obligation to do so," said Mr Brandt. "I think it is dis-

missing that a lady in Ms Short's position is making pontificating statements."

In describing local protests as minimal, and blaming the British media for blowing them up, Ms Short appeared to have missed a major point. Although recent street protests were small, virtually all remaining 4,000 islanders are opposed to the evacuation scheme.

The formation of the national consultative forum confirmed that. According to those who attended, the islanders decided to fight what they see as an attempt by Britain to drive them out by making it unviable to stay. It was at the forum's first meeting

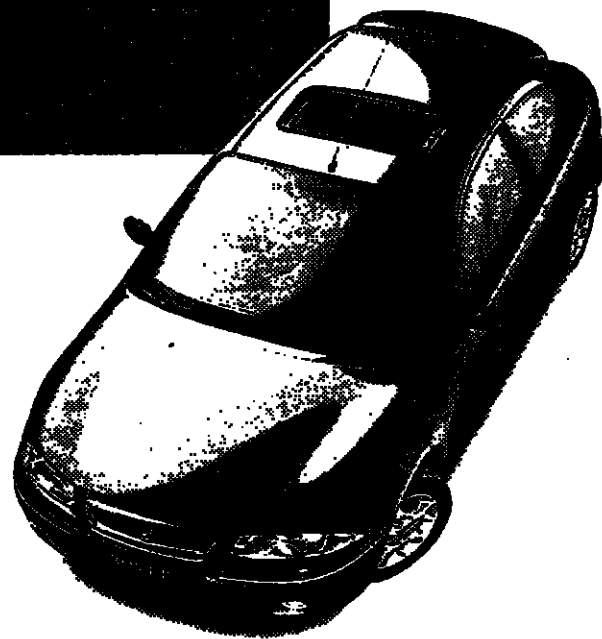
that the concept of "war" was first mentioned, by a cabinet minister.

As guest speaker at the forum's first meeting, the chief British scientist and volcanologist on the island, Professor Stephen Sparks of Bristol University, slammed the Government - which sent him here - and particularly Mr Foulkes, for misreading a scientific report on the volcano. As a result, scientists at the Montserrat Volcano Observatory were rewriting the report "to ensure it is not misunderstood," Professor Sparks said.

He insisted that the north of the island was safe despite Mr Foulkes' statement last week that the whole

£12,645.

The Rover 214iS.



RELAX

Call 0345 186 186 for details, or visit your local Rover dealer. Price, correct at time of going to press, includes 12 months road tax, delivery to dealer premises and number plates. Subject to vehicle availability.

هكذا من الامم



Defeated: A soldier wounded by shrapnel while defending the royalist stronghold of O'Smach being helped across the nearby Thai border yesterday

Photograph: AFP

Rag-tag Cambodian royalists take last breath of resistance

Matthew Chance
Chong Charn Pass

Beyond the frontier barrier of coiled barbed wire, where the tarmac of Thailand gives way to a muddy downhill track into war, bent metal poles fly ragged Cambodian flags in a breeze thick with the choking smell of fresh gunsmoke.

A soldier, pale-faced and soaked after the rains, is overcome with sleep behind an empty shack, seemingly oblivious to the barrage of rockets and artillery fire pounding the jungles around him. An armoured car, mounted with a portrait of Cambodia's smiling King Norodom Sihanouk alongside a 50mm machine gun, rumbles towards the horizon firing spurts of crackling bullets at unseen targets, prompting chilling squeals from the pigs running loose in the street.

Through the bedlam, a moped comes into earshot, picking its way through the water-filled ruts that pock-mark the route to the Thai border. Huddled together on the saddle are three men in tattered battle fatigues. One of them, propped up by his comrades, is dripping with blood from a shrapnel wound



that has blown off half his jaw. His friends leave him at the border, pick up his Kalashnikov, and turn to defend their final bastion. O'Smach, where 500 or 600 royalist fighters are pinned against the frontier with Thailand, may be little more than a deserted, handkerchief-sized corner of Cambodia. Its tin shacks, once roadside stalls, stand emptied of stock. It hardly seems worth fighting for.

But for the supporters of Prince Norodom Ranariddh, who was ousted as co-premier in a bloody coup d'état last month by his powerful rival and coalition partner, Hun Sen, O'Smach represents a last breath of resistance, their only hope of staking a claim in Cambodia's new equation of power.

bered, the royalists were cornered here two weeks ago, and have held on to the town against the odds with the help of Khmer Rouge fighters. Few expect the rag-tag of demoralised royalists to hold on much longer. The fact that the town has not capitulated already, say Thai military officials, is by virtue only of the hundreds, perhaps thousands, of landmines the royalists have scattered on the jungle slopes which lie between them and the forces of Hun Sen, waiting on the plains below.

"We will never be moved from this place," royalist commander General Nhiek Bun Chhay told *The Independent* by telephone from his O'Smach camp, as the mortars rained down, "as long as we have enough ammunition and food."

Supplies of artillery shells seem plentiful. From one position yesterday, royalist gunners fired 46 heavy explosive rounds into the jungles just two kilometres away, in a bid they said to kill the hundreds of government troops who had been on the point of entering O'Smach.

Hun Sen's men, well-trained and equipped, have been returning fire blow for blow, but their efforts have been ham-

pered by the proximity of the royalists to the border. At least two shells landed inside Thailand yesterday. No one was injured, but the Thai armed forces fired warning flares, threatening to strike back with "tremendous force" if there were any more incursions.

That is a prospect relished by the dissident Cambodian MPs encamped as a virtual government-in-exile at a plush Thai hotel, well away from the fighting.

They have been lobbying Thailand for support, aware that whether the administration in Bangkok likes it or not, the future of the royalist military struggle in north-western Cambodia depends largely on the *de facto* support offered in the sanctuary of the Thai border.

Already, Thailand has extended humanitarian assistance to more than 35,000 Cambodians who streamed across the border to escape the fighting last week. At the refugee camp five miles from Chong Chom, plastic sheeting and emergency food rations have been handed out by the Thai military and aid organisations, while medical teams treat cases of malaria and dysentery.

The people are grateful: "I wish Cambodia could be at

peace like Thailand," said Mira, a young mother who fled with her child as their village came under attack. But the Thais, though efficient, appear weary and are shying away from too much publicity: sensitive, perhaps, to an unspoken suspicion that they are in danger of taking sides in Cambodia's conflict, a suspicion hardly dispelled by the sight of full rice sacks being carried past the border fence by royalist soldiers at the weekend.

Despite its history of covert involvement in Cambodia's trou-

bles, increased business interests in Phnom Penh and affable ties with Hun Sen suggest on the face of it that Thailand has little reason to play anything more than a concerned neighbour.

But the Thai authorities are aware that once this latest round of fighting ends, stability is unlikely to return to the border region. Once the royalists are defeated, Hun Sen has vowed to move against the Khmer Rouge stronghold of Anlong Veng, which could send tens of thousands more Cam-

'Cigarettes set to kill 10m by 2025'

Conference sends a grim signal about world smoking epidemic

Teresa Poole
Peking

The 10th World Conference on Tobacco or Health opened yesterday in Peking with grim warnings about the cost of the smoking epidemic.

Patterns of smoking seen in the West after the Second World War, when 80 per cent of British and American men smoked, are being repeated in developing countries such as China, with the inevitable consequence of a surge in smoking-related deaths in decades to come.

The death-toll is set to shift from the developed to the developing world over the next 30 years. This will include a sharp rise in tobacco-related fatalities in China, where 320 million smokers puff their way through one in three of all cigarettes smoked world-wide.

Richard Peto, Professor of Medical Statistics at Oxford University and an authority on smoking, told the 1,800 delegates that he estimated that this year 3.5 million people world-wide will die of smoking, of whom 2 million are in the developed countries.

By about 2025 the annual global death-toll will reach 10 million, of whom 7 million will be in the developing countries. World-wide over the next 20 years there will be about 100 million deaths from smoking unless adult smokers stop.

China, where three-quarters of middle-aged men smoke, will see one of the biggest increases. "I know Deng Xiaoping survived to the age of 90, but he was an exception," said Mr Peto, referring to the chain-smoking Chinese patriarch, who died in February aged 92. But just as Deng eventually gave up, so should others. Those who stop before the age of 35 have a survival rate almost identical to lifelong non-smokers, and those who stop at a later age still show big benefits.

Mr Peto said figures indicated that 700,000 Chinese people

are dying of tobacco-related diseases a year, compared with 500,000 in the US and 500,000 in the European Union. "China already has more tobacco deaths than any other country," said Mr Peto.

Next century the annual toll in China will rise to 3 million; a third of all Chinese males under the age of 30 will be killed by tobacco.

China has seen an big increase in cigarette consumption over the past 20 years and is viewed by tobacco companies as the world's most enticing market. The director-general of the World Health Organisation, Hiroshi Nakajima, yesterday welcomed recent lawsuits against cigarette-makers in the US and the admission by the Liggett Group that tobacco was addictive.

Last week Geoffrey Bible, chairman of Philip Morris, conceded that some American deaths might have been caused "in part" by smoking. But Mr Nakajima warned: "We must demand that the large multinational tobacco companies that experience controls in their home countries are not free to expand into markets in other countries."

China's domestic tobacco industry is run by the government as a state monopoly, producing 1,700,000,000 cigarettes a year. Tobacco taxes are the biggest single contributor to central-government coffers in China. This may explain the often lax implementation of China's anti-smoking regulations. More than 70 cities have banned smoking in public places and from 1 May smoking was supposed to stop on all public transport, but in reality these rules are routinely disregarded. Yesterday's overall message was bleak. Half of long-term smokers will be killed by smoking diseases. It is "like flipping a coin", said Mr Peto. Half of those who die will do so before the age of 70, losing 20 to 25 years of their normal life expectancy.

A mortgage quote in 10 minutes flat. No wonder it's called a hotline.



Make a quick call to TSB PhoneBank for a free mortgage quote.

Because you'll save yourself a lot of time by finding out exactly

how much you can borrow before you go house hunting.

So if you want a free quote in ten minutes flat, ring TSB

PhoneBank on the number below and simply ask for it.

CALL FREE 0500 758 000
Quoting ref INH1

Mortgage Quotation Line

TSB We want you to say YES

Quota may be restricted and restricted. A TSB Cheque Request is required. Arrangement/acceptance of a suitable life policy may be required by the Bank as security. Applicants must be aged 18 or over. All loans subject to credit check. Not available in the Channel Islands. Written quotations are available on request by calling 0500 758 000. TSB Bank plc and TSB Bank Scotland plc are subsidiaries of the TSB Banking Group, which is regulated by the Prudential Regulation Authority only for TSB the insurance, pensions, and trusts and offshore investments. Advice or recommendations relate only to the services of the TSB Banking Group. TSB Bank plc, Victoria House, Victoria Square, Birmingham B1 1BZ, Registered in England and Wales. Number 1089268. TSB Bank Scotland plc, Henry Duncan House, 120 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4LH. Registered in Scotland. Number 90297.

YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT.

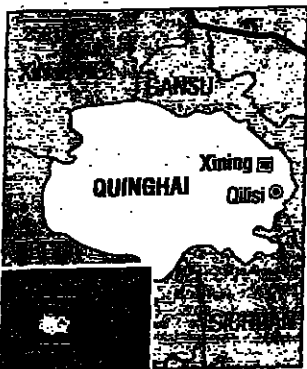
Tibetans with a gut feeling lured to the Spartan spa

QILISI DAYS

Driving hour after hour through the empty vistas of western China, any excuse to stop for a drink is most welcome. So when a weather-beaten sign pointed down a stony valley track and promised "Medicinal Water Spring 4km", it seemed considerably more enticing than the average motorway service-station. The only worry was whether anyone would be there; five hours' drive from Qinghai province's capital, Xining, and with no buildings nor other vehicles to be seen, the scope for attracting passing customers seemed perhaps limited.

How wrong we were. After rounding the last bend, the concrete and metal entrance gate to Qilisi Spring came into view, looking out of place by the side of a brook, nestled in a valley between mist-topped craggy hills. On one side was a terrace of Spartan one-room dwellings. And huddled around wood-burning stoves in each room, or perched on the kang heated brick beds, were families and groups of Tibetans, mostly in traditional dress or maroon monks' habits. No one was doing very much, other than recovering from the morning's over-consumption. For here were a group of visitors who approach their drinking very seriously indeed.

Taking the waters Tibetan style is no idle business. That day there were about 60 "patients" in residence at this rural spa. We were guided through the gate, past more dilapidated



ical: this was his 21st day at Qilisi, and every day during his stay he had drunk from the spring and drunk and drunk. Around 45 pints of water a day, in fact. Damzun was from neighbouring Gansu province, and had come to Qilisi because stomach problems were stopping him caring. He would go home the next day, a cured man, he said. One 23-year-old Tibetan man from southern Qing-

hai, knocking back another couple of pints, said he had heard about the spring last year when in hospital for his stomach. The water is said to contain more than 40 chemical elements, and emerges from the ground a pale yellow colour and tasting rather like flat soda-water. Drinking large quantities from the spring, it is believed by Tibetans and other Qinghai residents, can help cure stomach disorders, loss of appetite, restore the sense of taste, and ease digestion of wine and meat. Shacks near by provide rudimentary restaurants whose optimistic owners presumably believe in the curative powers of the waters.

Legend has it that the Qilisi spring was discovered more than 1,000 years ago by a sturdy black cow, and a Tibetan Buddhist temple was built here after the 17th century, dedicated to the God of Medicine. A short pamphlet introducing Qilisi suggests a stay of between 21 and 36 days, and many people seem to. Most visitors that day were ethnic Tibetans, including several monks, and several people had travelled up to hundreds of miles from the Tibetan regions of Qinghai, Gansu and Sichuan provinces. Everyone cited stomach problems as the reason for their journey. Indeed, behind the spring pipes was a

small prayer after to Sanjimala, described by one of the Tibetans as the "God of the Stomach". The pamphlet promised: "When patients first come, they are all very thin and pallid, and supported by their worried relatives. But when they go home, they look much ruddier in complexion, and very happy."

Water is free, and the rooms in which groups of visitors usually sleep cost 5 yuan (40p) a night. As health spas around the world go, this one is excellent value, although with an average intake of 45 pints per day per person, I can't vouch for the lairiness. But Minhe County government, within whose jurisdiction the spring lies, harbours rather more ambitious plans for this quiet backwater. According to the pamphlet, published in 1989, a proposed medical clinic and bathhouse will be just the beginning. The spring water will be used to produce "champagne and fruit juice", temples will be renovated, gardens landscaped, pavilions constructed, and modern recreation facilities offered, including an electronic games hall and dodgem cars. "Under the leadership of the Communist Party and with the deepening of opening up and reform, we believe this place will be a comparatively ideal tourist resort," it said. Somewhere along the line, this proposal fortunately seems to have been lost in someone's in-tray.

Teresa Poole

10
international

Iran's new regime opens doors of power to women



First: Masoumeh Ebtekar, new Iranian vice-president

Agencies

Tehran - Iran's new president, Mohammad Khatami, and his Cabinet had an audience with the country's supreme leader yesterday on the first working day of the new administration. At the meeting with Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was a vice-president whose appointment has caused waves throughout the country and beyond: Masoumeh Ebtekar, the first woman to serve in a top government position since Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution.

Ms Ebtekar, 37, who has a doctorate in immunology, served on the editorial board of the newspaper *Kayhan International* and was acting

head of the central committee of Iran's non-governmental women's organisation. She represented Iran at the World Women's Conference in Nairobi and Peking.

Hojatollah Khatami, a moderate Shia Muslim cleric, named Ms Ebtekar on Saturday, meeting expectations that he would allow women into high positions in his administration. She will also head the Environmental Protection Agency.

Hojatollah Khatami also named other vice-presidents: Mohammad Bagerian, Mohammad Ali Najafi, Mohammad Hashemi and Abdolwahab Mousavi-Lari. Hojatollah Khatami was sworn in on 4 August after winning a landslide election victory in May which he owed to the votes of women, the young and the middle class, who saw him as being able to inject fresh freedoms into the strict Islamic state.

The message from Hojatollah Khatami yesterday was one of welcome, but also caution. "Khatami expressed his satisfaction with the start of the new government's work, hoping that with fresh strength, high morale and solidarity it will fulfil its crucial duties in the best way, leaving a good mark in Iran's history," state television reported. But the supreme leader also stressed the need to observe Islamic values, and resist dominance of "arrogant powers" especially in the field of "cultural

invasion". Earlier yesterday Hojatollah Khatami and his ministers visited the shrine of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini to pay respects to the leader who deposed the US-backed Shah in Iran's 1979 revolution.

Several ministers on Saturday took over in ceremonies at key ministries. Significant appointments by Hojatollah Khatami include the new Culture Minister, Atollah Mohajerani, a relative liberal, and the Foreign Minister, Kamal Kharrazi.

The US is showing cautious signs of interest in the new regime. "To the extent that the election of President Khatami and the approval of his cabinet indicate that the will and welfare of the people of Iran will be reflected

by its government, we would welcome that," said a State Department spokesman. But US conditions for dialogue with Iran include agreement by Tehran to discuss its alleged support for terrorism and pursuit of nuclear weapons and its hostility to the Middle East peace process. Iran insists Washington must drop the terrorism charge.

Iran's exiled opposition and many Western scholars say the "moderate" image is a sham and that neither Hojatollah Khatami nor any government he appoints have power to change Iran's foreign policy, which is controlled by Ayatollah Khamenei and by anti-Western elements loyal to him. On Friday Ayatollah Khamenei

appointed the outgoing foreign minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, as his adviser on international affairs.

A prominent cleric, Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati, told a prayer meeting on Friday that "Governments come and go but our principles stay intact. These principles are Islam, Islamic revolution and not giving in to Israel and America as long as they treat us with hostility."

One of Hojatollah Khatami's earliest foreign-policy challenges will be to reach agreement with the European Union for EU ambassadors to return to Tehran. They were recalled as a result of a German court ruling which accused Tehran of ordering political killings abroad.

Sweden owns up to racial purification

Simon Haydon
Reuters

Stockholm - The Swedish government could face thousands of legal claims for compensation because of a Nazi-style campaign of forced sterilisation of women that historians say has been hushed up for years.

Swedes have been shocked over past days by revelations from journalist Maciej Zaremba that Swedish governments sterilised 60,000 women to rid Swedish society of "inferior" racial types and to encourage Aryan features.

"What happened was nothing but barbaric," said the Social Affairs Minister Margot Wallstrom, adding she was prepared to review laws which said the sterilisations were written into law and that damages could not be paid.

Maciej Zaremba, whose revelations have been published by the liberal newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*, said Sweden, Norway and Denmark pioneered racial cleansing "sciences" after the First World War.

In Sweden, the sterilisations began in 1935, peaking in 1946

and were not stopped until 1976. Officially voluntary, victims say they were ordered to sign permission slips or risk losing their children and benefits.

Most of the victims were "inferior" or of "poor or mixed racial quality", meaning people with learning difficulties, from poor families or who were not of Nordic blood stock.

Most signs of 40 years of forced sterilisation have disappeared from school and history books, Maciej Zaremba says. One victim, Maria Nordin, 72, said she was viewed as educationally "inferior" because she had no glasses as a child and could not see the school blackboard.

Thrust into a school for the mentally subnormal, Ms Nordin was called into an office at the age of 17 - during the Second World War - to sign some papers. "I signed because I knew I had to get out ... I was sent to Bollnas hospital where they took everything out. A Dr Ingvarsson said to me, 'you're not very bright, you can't have children,'" she said.

Ms Wallstrom, who confessed to feeling ashamed that

she originally rejected Ms Nordin's application for damages in 1996, said she would raise the subject in cabinet.

"The silence surrounding this issue has been caused by it going so deep in society. People are defending themselves," she said.

Ms Wallstrom said the rise of neo-Nazism in Europe and the ability of scientists to manipulate genes meant this was a good time for such issues to be discussed.

Drawing comparisons between Sweden and Nazi Germany is like rubbing salt on a wound for many Swedes, who already feel shame about Sweden's neutrality during the Second World War and help offered by governments at the time to the German war effort.

The issue of forced sterilisation is also painful in a country which prides itself on a liberal tradition.

The most astonishing thing, Maciej Zaremba wrote, is the ideological difference. In Germany it was the Nazis, and in Scandinavia it was the welfare states that showed the most willingness to cleanse themselves of "racially" or "socially inferior" types.

Pontiff draws biggest crowd of his French visit



Pilgrims' progress: Priests at the Mass said by the Pope yesterday near Paris. Many of the faithful spent the night camping out Photograph: AFP

Pope courts controversy with St Bartholomew's Day mass

Agencies

Paris - The Pope drew his biggest crowd in France yesterday as more than 1 million people crammed Longchamp racecourse, for an open-air Mass.

But the date chosen was hardly auspicious: the anniversary of the St Bartholomew's Day Massacre, when thousands of French Protestant Huguenots were murdered by Catholic militia.

The Pope sought on Saturday to allay the controversy over the killings, on 24 August, 1572, by referring to the Catholic role and appealing for inter-religious unity.

"On the eve of August 24, we cannot forget the sad massacre of St Bartholomew's Day, an event of very obscure causes in the political and religious history of France."

"Christians did things which the Gospel condemns," he said in a vigil before the Mass, dur-

ing which he pleaded with young people to revive faded Roman Catholic faith in the West.

"Belonging to different religious traditions must not constitute today a source of opposition and tension," he said. The Pontiff made no further mention yesterday of the massacres, which came during civil wars.

The 77-year-old Pope, who has looked weary in the sweltering heat during his 79th overseas trip, smiled and looked at ease as the young pilgrims repeatedly cheered him. However, he also hinted at his tiredness and age, saying: "The longer we live, the more we realise how precarious life is, and the more we wonder about immortality."

Many of the young people had spent the night singing, dancing and camping out at the racecourse or in the nearby Bois de Boulogne at the end of the World Youth Days festival.

"Dear young people, your journey does not end here ... go forth now along the roads of the world, along the pathways of humanity, while remaining ever united in Christ's Church," said the Pope, who invited them to the next World Youth Days in Rome in 2000, which he has declared a jubilee, or holy year, at the start of the millennium.

Church officials feared before the festival that the turn-out could be embarrassingly low. In the event, the crowd was one of the biggest the Pope has drawn recently and on a par with that during an emotional visit to his Polish homeland last June.

Opinion polls coinciding with the trip, however, show that French people increasingly consider the Church irrelevant and the Pope's conservative morality out of step with modern life.

The vast turn-out was also a boost for the Church after the Pope clashed with France's ruling Socialist Party over his visit to the grave of his friend, Jerome Lejeune, a leading ge-

neticist and anti-abortion campaigner.

The Pope also raised a French female saint to a privileged place in the male-dominated church. He said that he would make Saint Therese of Lisieux a doctor of the Church at a ceremony at the Vatican in October.

Doctors of the Church are people of great holiness whose teaching or spirituality has had a profound impact on the life of the Church.

Saint Therese will be the 33rd doctor of the church but only the third woman, joining Saint Teresa of Avila and Catherine of Siena, who were named to the position in 1970. No one has been made a doctor of the church since then and the Pope has never conducted the ceremony.

Saint Therese, who died of tuberculosis 100 years ago aged 24, is a co-patroness of France alongside the Virgin Mary, Joan of Arc and Saint Martin. She was made a saint in 1925.

US scraps 25m pounds of beef in food-bug scare

Mary Dejevsky
Washington

The United States food industry, which prides itself on being "the safest in the world", is facing demands for even stricter food hygiene standards following the recall of 25 million pounds of ground beef and the closure of a major meat packaging plant last week. The recall, ordered after an outbreak of *E. coli* food poisoning in Colorado, was the largest ever in the US, and has put the vast meat industry under the microscope.

Yesterday, many media reports claimed that the lax practices inspectors uncovered at the plant - a big packaging operation at Columbus, Nebraska, belonging to Arkansas-based food giant, Hudson Foods Inc. - were widespread. One report said beef cows in Arkansas were regu-

larly fed chicken waste that could contain faecal matter, a source of the *E. coli* bacteria. One rancher defended the practice as highly effective and economical, fuelling the suspicions of those who question the intensive methods of much US agriculture.

The government has been accused of over-reacting in summing up shutting down the Nebraska plant. The *E. coli* outbreak appears to have been relatively minor, with only 17 reported cases and no fatalities. But opinion polls suggest that confidence in the safety of US food has been undermined and the public needs reassurance.

A poll conducted for *Newsweek* magazine found that 54 per cent of those asked were less likely to buy hamburgers at fast-food outlets and 41 per cent were less likely to buy hamburgers at the supermarket. In-

structions for safe cooking, however, led one food expert to say that any burger cooked for the stated time would be "dry as a husk".

Around 9,000 people die of food poisoning in the US each year, and the figure is rising, some say because of better diagnosis and record-keeping. Hudson Foods has insisted that its plant was strictly run and adhered to all hygiene regulations, and employees appeared to confirm that. While violations had been registered before, they were mostly for infringements not related to hygiene. The company's official line continues to be that the contamination must have come from outside the plant, probably from a slaughter house. Department of Agriculture inspectors do not rule out this

possibility, but pressed for the closure of the plant after discovering what they said were lax procedures and record-keeping.

The singled out practices, reportedly common in other meat packaging companies, whereby meat left over from one day's processing was added to the next day's batch without any record of which batches were involved. This meant, they said, that it was impossible to guarantee that the contamination had been contained in one day's production.

The hamburger chain Burger King, which is supplied by Hudson, announced on Saturday that they had cancelled their hamburger contract with Hudson and would never buy from the company again. They have, however, kept their contract for chicken, which comes from a different Hudson plant.

IF YOU'D LIKE TO RETIRE
WITH A MILLION -
START TAKING YOUR
OWN ADVICE.

"At last it is possible for a normal human being to learn the ins-and-outs of money-management and investing without all sorts of pompous and confusing technical waffle ... The Successful Personal Investing programme from IRS is like a great breath of fresh air."

Douglas Moffitt, TV and Radio Financial Commentator

complicated - and too baffling. In short, they're stuck. They are successful in many other respects. But when it comes to investing and money management they have no real plan. All because there's been no simple way to get started. That is, until now ...

SUCCESSFUL PERSONAL INVESTING (SPI) is the much acclaimed, up-to-the-minute, "hands-on", self-instruction course in investing and money management that you follow at home - at your own pace - with no pressure.

In simple language it outlines step-by-step how to build your own financial independence - and how to take the million or so you'll probably earn in your lifetime and get started on building the million you want to end up with - and all without depending on some "expert" - and without paying for advice that may not be truly independent.

THE SPI COURSE starts with the basics and then goes on to the "tricks of the trade" - the simple, tried and true techniques that enable you to protect and then pyramid profits to build wealth even faster.

First - you'll quickly see how to "uncover" up to an extra £2,000 a year to invest - money you probably didn't even know you had.

Second - you'll be surprised at how easy it is to learn how to evaluate pension schemes - gilts - shares - Personal Equity Plans - Enterprise Investment Schemes - property investments - simple strategies that can slash your tax bill - in fact, all the important areas of investing and money management.

Third - And maybe most rewarding, you'll learn in detail about a number of crafty but simple "behind-the-scenes" techniques that you don't usually get to find out about at all. The kind that can often boost your returns 20, 30, even 50 per cent more - sometimes just in months - not years.

FOR EXAMPLE, a little technique called a "straddle", lets you bet that the Stockmarket will go up - and at the same time bet that it will go down - believe it or not, it is perfectly possible to make a profit whether it goes up or goes down!

Or how you can use your pension plan to turn £770 into £1,000 overnight -

or more if you're a higher rate taxpayer. Of course there's a good deal more. But as you can see Successful Personal Investing is definitely not just some collection of "hot tips" or boring technical mumbo-jumbo.

Always everything is spelled out step-by-step, like a simple recipe. So you take just those steps that are right for your own circumstances.

BEAR IN MIND TOO, that the publisher of SPI, Independent Research Services Ltd., is not limited in any way to any vested interests. It is not connected with any Stockbroker or Insurance Agency or Unit Trust or the like - and it has no commissioned Salesmen or Agents. So you can be absolutely sure that what you learn will be for no one's benefit but yours.

Let's face it - most people spend more time planning a fortnight's holiday than learning how to manipulate their money. Surprisingly, SPI takes only a couple of hours of your time a month. There is no burning of the midnight oil.

True, money isn't everything. But it does help. SPI shows you how to start on the way towards having that million - and being able to tell yourself that you're a "millionaire". So, before your mind clings shut over that word again - why not at least take the opportunity to see for yourself? You can now get to look over the first two lessons with no obligation for 10 days just by posting the coupon below. And whatever you decide, Lesson 1 is yours to keep - FREE!

IRS ADVISORY BOARD: Peter Oppenheimer, Chairman; Kevin Goldstein-Jackson, Walter Sinclair FCA. IRS and Independent Research Services are trading names of Independent Research Services Ltd. Registered in England No. 2128961. Registered Office: 5-7 Bridge Street, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX14 3HN

POST THIS RISK-FREE FORM TODAY TO:
IRS, FREEPOST, 5-7 Bridge Street, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 3ZT

Here's how the **SUCCESSFUL PERSONAL INVESTING** PROGRAMME WORKS:

- 1) Two lessons are made available every 3 to 4 weeks, at £11.25 each, plus postage.
- 2) You may review each of the 37 lessons in the course for 10 days - at no charge - and "pay as-you-go" only for those you decide to keep.
- 3) You may cancel this arrangement at any time, and drop out of the course whenever you want.

On this basis, please send me the first two lessons. I'll review them at no charge. Then, I'll either send back Lesson 2 - or pay for it only if I decide I want to continue. In any case I may keep Lesson 1 - free.

Name Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms

Address

Postcode

We may occasionally offer selected reputable companies to read you with interesting offers.

Please tick here if you'd prefer not to have this opportunity.

IND 25/97

150 من الاموال

VS
y
ty
or
W
e
ry into
1971
as an
inde-
study
com-
Simon
of the
myers,
ficers
cus on
to be
grow-
Gov-
it to
time.
n and
rds.
uding
fund
of the
h cul-
have
s is a
ndent
long
signed
set of
ew is
tree is
ignal
lecide
revi-
ntess
the
ssion,
pave
scrim-
quity
on be-
in this
art at-
leg-
device
that
ng to
nt to
re are
issue
con-
have
said
o ex-
ation
ould

Jimmy's as deep as they come

The Monday Interview

JIMMY McGOVERN

The Lake District may seem a tranquil setting for the man who made 'Cracker'. But his new drama is riddled with conflict, just like the man himself.

By Jasper Rees

Assuming they know their television, the motorists passing on the lakeside road, or the hikers who stride blinkingly on to the set from the footpath, can tell that there's a prime-time series in production. Exquisite rural setting – in this case fells, peaks and pikes lowering beyond the still depths of Ullswater – plus swarm of emergency service vehicles, equals 10 million viewers on Sunday evening. Today they're doing a key drowning scene, with professional divers in wetsuits who have been engaged to fish the corpses of children out of the deep.

So, a big day for the kids. For the grown-up actors making *The Lakes*, a BBC drama series about urban scallies who work in the Lake District hotels and incur the wrath of the locals by preying on their daughters, it's also more interesting than usual, because the writer is on set. And not just any old writer. Jimmy McGovern, much-garlanded progenitor of *Cracker* and *Hillsborough*, is round the back of the boathouse, leaning on one of the ambulances, smoking, and looking thoroughly out of context in urban smart-casuals.

He confesses that he finds film sets excruciating, even if, on the only ones he ever visits, they're saying his lines.

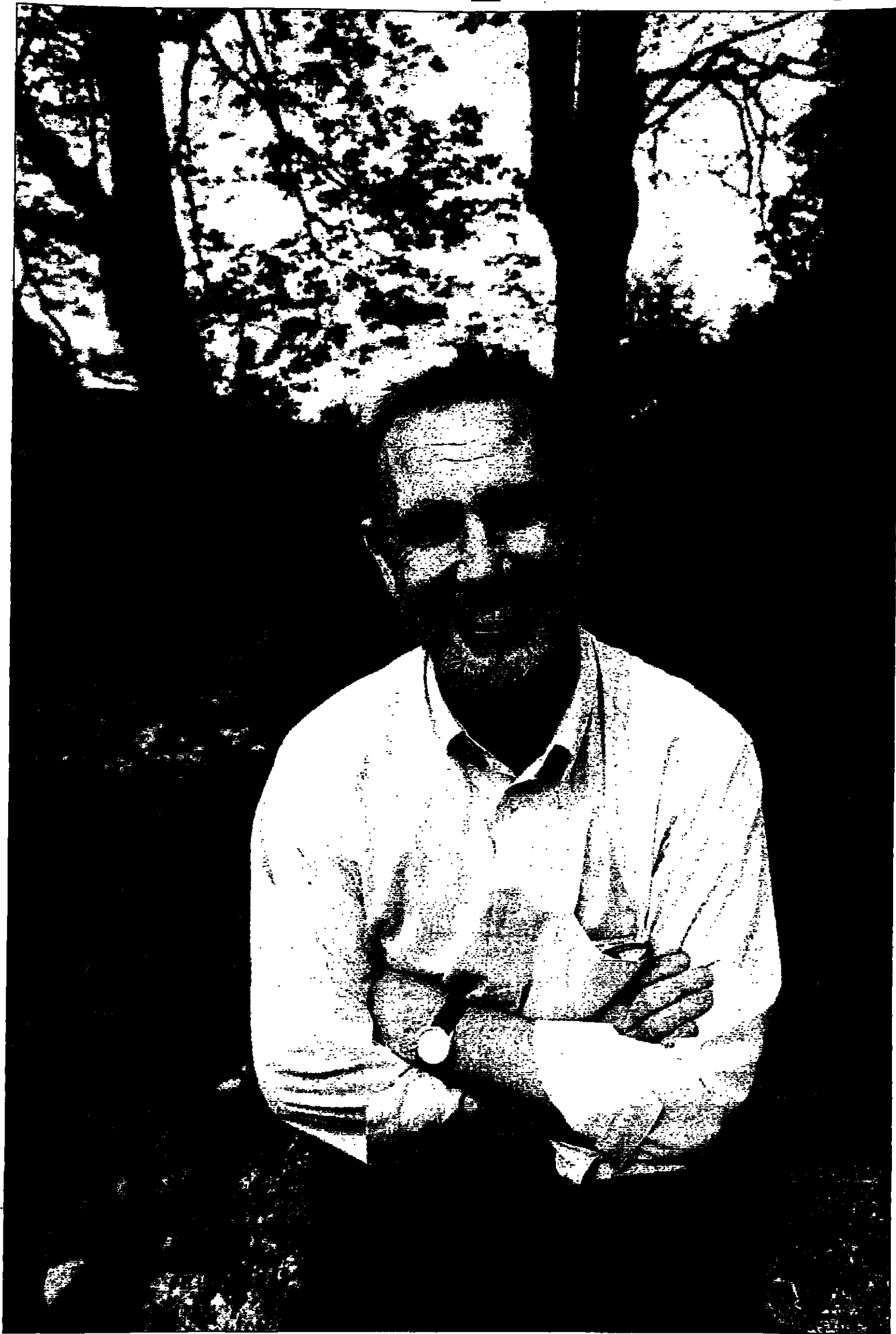
"I should be on a set more, and then I would know the grammar and the etiquette. You're telling the actor how good he is, and the actor is standing there very dutifully, knowing that there are people over there wanting him immediately, but he's not impolite enough to tell you that; and then he excuses himself and goes, and you realise what a stupid prick you've been."

Not that McGovern is paranoid or anything. During the making of *Hillsborough* he suspected that the police, cast as the villains of the piece, were tapping his phone. "Total paranoia," he confesses. He tells a story of being in the gent's of the pub he drinks in on Friday nights, "and this great big guy comes in, you know, huge guy, unmistakably a copper, and he says to me, 'Jimmy?' Yeah? 'McGovern?' I'm absolutely shitting myself. Great big guy. He says, 'I've got a message for you: phone Colin immediately.' Colin is an old mate of mine. Go to phone him, and he's got tickets for me for a game. And that's all the message was. And I turn round to this guy and say thanks very much, and he explains, 'I'm an old mate of Colin's.' Harmless really. Except that the radar that makes McGovern so good at his job was on the right track: "Of course, he was a copper."

He is visibly buoyed up by the suggestion that we repair to a more familiar habitat in the village. "I'll have a pint of Boddys, please," he says. It's the first of four. McGovern is not one to spurn alcohol during interviews. He's not the spurning type. He once made a visit to Dublin to promote his film *Priest*, during a period of intense overwork after the success of *Cracker*, when green lights simultaneously flared for sundry projects and he was needed on set here, for interviews there, for deadlines everywhere.

"I was totally fucked, and we got back to Dublin airport and we're going to fly home, which I'm terrified about anyway, and I was stuck in the middle of this airport with these two big bags and taken short. So I lug these two big bags to the toilet, get there in time, had a shit, looked down and it's jet black. And I'm feeling like shit. I'm feeling as though I'm going to die. So I stagger out, find Eileen [his wife] and say, 'Eileen, go on, get me to hospital. I've just done this jet-black shit.' She said, 'Jimmy, you've had 10 pints of Guinness.'"

The black stuff. The phrase was patented nearly 20 years ago by Alan Bleasdale, Liverpool's other small-screen big hitter. But it could just as well describe the drama that issues from McGovern's imagination, with its dark understanding of the



Jimmy McGovern, lapsed Catholic, ex-gambler, ex-teacher, ex-scally: pieces from his life are scattered through his work Photograph: Joe Bangay

Manichean psyche, its intimacy with the curlicues of Catholic guilt, its knowledge that animal instincts pulse beneath the epidermis we call civility. In McGovern's obituaries it will one day be written that he managed to cook up prime-time drama out of these complex ingredients, to cram them into cop shows and soaps and into apparently polite series like *The Lakes*.

That imagination got a perfect start in childhood. There were already four older siblings when he was born in 1949, and four more would later be squeezed into a two-up, two-down in a working-class, largely Irish district of Liverpool. Young Jimmy scarcely spoke till he was eight. He still avoids radio and television interviews because of a now-imperceptible stammer. Perhaps he inherited his misgivings about the spoken word from his mother, who got his names the wrong way round at his christening. His first name is officially Stanley.

McGovern has refrained from mining his own upbringing for material – although he is currently

writing a film for the BBC called *Liam*, about an eight-year-old growing up in Thirties Liverpool. But the jigsaw pieces of his adult life are scattered through his work. His experiences as a teacher in a large secondary school, and later as a parent embroiled in the saga of opting out, went into *Hearts and Minds*. The deplorable gambling habit was given to Fitz in *Cracker*. The lapsed Catholic's inquisitiveness about human motive weaves through everything he has ever written.

Even his forays into history – a drama about the Gunpowder Plot, and a script in development about Mary Queen of Scots – have a popish underpinning. "I can often spot convent-educated women," he said to me on a previous occasion. "That will make me sound stupid, I know, but actually I've done that many a time, and the subject hasn't even got on to Catholicism." We sit there in the pub and, between us, we count up the instances in his work of key plot twists that hinge on a priest being unable to break the seal of confession. I say I hope there's not

another one in *The Lakes*. "Well, I'm afraid you're going to be disappointed."

You'd think that *The Lakes* would find him parting company with the handrail of autobiography. A couple of years ago I interviewed McGovern when he was fresh out of a meeting with the head of drama at the BBC. He had just been pitching the idea for *The Lakes*. It didn't sound very inner-city, very McGovern. There's not a lot of Catholic guilt in Grassmere. And yet it turns out not only that McGovern was once one of those scallies washing dishes in a Cumbrian hotel, but also that his wife Eileen is one of those local girls.

McGovern's lead character is also hooked on gambling, a vice that had seduced his creator long before he came up to the Lakes as a callow teenager. In rural exile from the betting shops, it wasn't so easy to feed the habit, at least not at first. "You had to go into Ambleside, which was four miles away, to have a bet. But then, tragedy of tragedies, you find out that you can have a phone account."

The habit grew much more serious later on, with the newly wed McGovern back in Liverpool and Jimmy, in a story that's the centre-piece of all the profiles, hitting rock bottom by spending his odd-jobber's pay packet on a crooked nag.

He caught the bug young, at "seven or eight". "The community was a gambling community. It was just part of working-class culture in the inner city: the football, the gambling, the booze – that's what men did."

His father was one of those men, "but he was really controlled. Very responsible man, my dad." Why wasn't his fifth child? "I don't know. I think addictive personalities are addictive personalities. I'm not massively addictive, but I am addictive. I know that. And if you're into a thing like gambling you're fucked."

What about the fags? How many a day? "That's gone up because I've been under pressure. [And no wonder: as he speaks, a movie script about transplants, called *Heart*, with Christopher Eccleston and Saskia Reeves, is also about to go into production.] About 30 now. I can get by on 20." He has tried giving up, slapping on the nicotine patches. "But you get bad dreams with the patches – they're really amazing things." As for the drink ... well, you know about the drink.

In the Lakes, he and his mates didn't just fritter their earnings away on horses. They played football, hotel against hotel, with McGovern on the wing or up front. "I was like lightning. Don't get me wrong, I was never that good, but I was quick." Nearly 30 years on, one game lives on in the memory. "We played a hotel from Ambleside, and God knows why, but it got nasty. I'm small now but I was even smaller then. It got nasty and I squared up to this really big guy, and he just gripped me in his really amazing grip, so fierce the grip, he just kept my head down, and afterwards all the lads said he was twice ready to hit, but he didn't hit me. Anyway, about a week or so later

'I said, get me to hospital, I've done this jet-black shit. She said, Jimmy, you've just had 10 pints of Guinness'

we ended up in this pub and there was pictures all over the wall. He'd sparred with Cassius Clay! He was a great boxer, this guy. And he had signed messages from Cassius Clay. And I thought, if he'd hit me I'd be dead."

The more peaceable things that people do in the Lakes attracted the incipient writer's attention. He mucked about on boats once or twice, attempted the odd fell, and dabbled in Wordsworth, whom, unsurprisingly for someone who gave us the *Grants of Brookside*, he didn't fancy. "People tell me he was a great poet, but with a really great poet you never feel that he's at the mercy of rhythm and rhyme. He makes the rhythm and rhyme become his slave, and I don't think Wordsworth ever did."

It's no shock to discover that his favourite poet is the Jesuit priest Gerard Manley Hopkins. "Read 'The Wind Hovers'. Best 4 lines ever written."

McGovern's own secret of good writing is: "I never think of myself as a writer. I think of myself as a storyteller. And the story is paramount. And you've got to tell that story, and you tell that story in the most simple, economical way possible, and you do not show off. I know writers who show off in the telling of the story, and it's bollocks. It certainly happened early on in my career, in *Brookside* and things. But not now."

When McGovern's work began to find an audience, first in the theatres of Liverpool and then with *Brookside*, the compulsive gambling seems to have subsided. His first cheque for a *Brookside* script was £475. "I thought, fuck me, this is phenomenal money. But I never raised my living standards at all, and the bank balance totted up, totted up, totted up. In 1984 we actually moved into a semi, and the semi was something like £49,000."

It's an obvious point to make, but he now takes risks in his work rather than in the betting shop, and they have given the edge to his writing. Success may have civilised his suits and eradicated the racism that he argues is indivisible from poverty. But there is an enduring rawness. He must be the only leading dramatist in this country who, when explaining how tortuously his mind works, uses a story about his bowel movements as an illustration.

His only notable coyness is reserved for the bedroom. The unmodish lack of nudity in his work is partly a matter of tasteful restraint, partly the result of complex, Fitz-like mental machinations. In the script of *Priest*, the point at which the young priest and his boyfriend have a long and unprecedented frank love scene, McGovern merely indicated that they have "urgent and passionate sex".

"Fifteen years ago I might have gone into how they make love, but the people I work with are predominantly young women. You do not want to sit there discussing your script with a gang of young women; subconsciously in their mind is, 'you've always wanted them to take it up the bum.'"

God, it must be hell being Jimmy McGovern.

The Lakes begins on BBC 1 on 14 September.

Look, isn't that Camilla with the duty-free Malibu?

I counted them on, and I counted them off. Hundreds of British cars leaving the ferry at Boulogne and all bar a few sporting the old-style GB stickers. This is a shocking indictment of New Labour Britain – as a matter of principle I refused to leave the country before managing to track down one of those pretty stickers with the stars round them: the other ones simply shriek Euro-sceptic.

Holiday phobias are apparently another casualty of the work-obsessed Nineties, but I'm with Princess Diana on this one. Why take one, when four will do. While she has been jetting around in private Harrods planes, Camilla Parker Bowles was spotted leaving Britain for Malaga on a charter flight. The pro-Parker Bowles campaign is stepping up; this was obviously a blatant PR move to show she has the common touch and can breathe in the "search of humanity" like the rest of us.

I hope she was properly briefed on Malaga airport etiquette: on the return journey she will need to equip herself with a toy donkey and respond to the call of duty free with a bottle of Malibu.

Apart from my stand on European Union car stickers, I'm not sure my family has contributed much to Anglo-French relations. It's strange, isn't it, but whereas English spoken in a French accent is considered charming and sexy, the French are erred completely intolerant of any deviation from perfect pronunciation and grammar. Every time my four-year-old sweetly uttered "merci", some French waitress would make a terrifying gurgling sound back at her because she was not rolling her r's in the required manner. But it's the butchers who really cut you down to size. Having been caught out before by those innocent-looking Tesco-style chickens (you pick them up and suddenly these

scary claws and heads unfurl from underneath the body like something out of a John Carpenter movie), I thought I'd play safe at the Super-U meat counter and ask for half a kilo of mince. "Bah! Les Anglais," sneered the butcher, delivering a long tirade to the rest of the waiting customers about how English people only ever buy mince.

Humiliating – but sadly, probably true.

For the children the main stumbling block to an "entente cordiale" was the French people's unsentimental attitude to animals, particularly the tendency to get on talking terms with their meat before eating it. At the 17th century "chambres d'hôte" farm-



Dinah Hall

well – our hosts joined us and the Dutch couple who were also staying – but just as we were silently savouring the delicacy of the filo-wrapped *chevre*, one of the children broke wind. Now this was not an abrupt emission that could easily be disguised by the scraping of a chair leg: it was more of

a symphony, really. Nathalie and Bruno gamely made some remark about their dog, but as he had died since we were there last year, this was not convincing. I, meanwhile, was stunned into silence – my keen sense of directional hearing had led me to the culprit (who has asked for anonymity) and it was not who I expected. "I fart all the time, and you never write about it," my 10-year-old, reading over my shoulder, has just protested with a true sense of sibling injustice. Quite.

My file of I-know-a-woman-who-danced-with-a-man-who-danced-with-Tony Blair stories is coming on nicely. I'm not sure whether being vaguely in the same south-west area of France for our holiday counts for much, but now to add to my dinner party status, already elevated by my daughter's god-father's best friend playing in Ugly Rumours with the Blessed Blair at

Oxford, I can divulge that on his way down to Tuscany Tony stopped for a coffee in my best friend's boyfriend's family village ... Bragging apart, though, the reason the Blairs and I steer clear of the more popular coastal areas is the topless bathers. Ever since my eldest son asked in a loud voice why French women's "boobies" go up while mine go down, I have avoided places likely to result in comparisons. I got my come-uppance, however, in one of the fascinating and educational *grotes* which proliferate in this area of France ("If you don't behave, well go to another *grotte*", was my holiday refrain) – while the guide was tiresomely pointing out stalactites that supposedly looked like cauliflower, the Virgin Mary or Princess Diana, my four-year-old declaimed her own interpretation of the wrinkly, pendulous appendages hanging down from the ceiling. Five years of breast-feeding, and this is the thanks I get.

the leader page

A generation with better things to do than watch TV

For years we worried that young people watch too much television. Now, when at last there is evidence that they are watching less, we are bound to worry about what else they might be doing with their time. Surely if they are not watching mindless American pap or violent videos, they must be playing computer games, searching for porn on the Internet, making each other pregnant or sniffing glue?

Certainly, one group of people most alarmed by the trend are television bosses, who fear they may be losing their grip on the market of tomorrow. They are often in thrall to a second group of people, advertisers, who sometimes give the impression of becoming increasingly desperate about the difficulty of communicating with younger age groups. Why young people don't watch television was one of the underlying themes of last weekend's Edinburgh TV Festival, the industry's annual navel-gazing cum showing-off exercise.

The apocalyptic scenario was most luridly painted by an American analyst called Douglas Rushkoff, who warned that what he called "screenagers" were being lost to television. These young people are literate in the new language of the communications revolution, he says, and will watch less and less conventional television as computer games and the Internet become more sophisticated. This was, in the brash American style, an argument put forward with

little of the supporting evidence which might have slowed down its breathless rush to a simplistic conclusion. The idea, for instance, that young people are less interested in narrative than they used to be does not stand up to scrutiny.

But the amount of television we watch has undoubtedly fallen over the past 10 years, and especially among 16- to 24-year-olds. This may appear to be bad news for the corporate planners who are trying to build brand loyalty among the viewers who will matter once the technological changes in the television industry really get going. As a newspaper, *The Independent* understands the need for media companies to "grow" their audience. And it is important to our civic culture that the BBC should develop habits of viewing and listening which support public service broadcasting. But the idea that some people "only watch the BBC" because independent television is vulgar is already laughably out of date. Equally, there are very few who would say that they switch on to Channel 4 first, or who even have the vaguest interest in which television company produces which programme. Of course, channels have identities, and the BBC's brand name is a guarantor of a minimum level of quality. But the primary loyalty viewers have is to programmes – or to sports, a fact exploited ruthlessly by Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB.

So if programme-makers are pro-

ducing programmes which fewer young people watch, is that a good or a bad thing? Surely the answer depends partly on the rival attractions on offer, because it is not possible meaningfully to argue that the diversity and quality of programmes has declined. If one of the main causes of the great switch-off has been the growing range of other and better things to do, then the trend should be welcomed. Over the past decade, more young people have been staying on in full-time education and in recent years youth unemployment has been falling. Also, Mr Rushkoff is clearly right that the explosion of computer owner-

ship and services now offers a vast choice of alternative screen-based activity, some of which is worthwhile and some of which is not – like TV, in fact.

It seems likely, then, that young people are turning off not because television programmes are failing to keep up with their changing tastes, but because they prefer to do something else. In which case the Rushkoff prescription – to abandon narrative and compete for the attention of the least attentive – would be a recipe for disaster.

That does not mean television's rulers should be complacent, however, because it does matter what young people watch.

Last week, the pro-censorship lobby seized on a new study which purported to show that violent films can make aggressive young people more violent.

This story, and stories like it, have been a familiar feature of the journalistic and ideological landscape for much of the last 20 years. The scenery has not changed partly because the case for there being a link between screen violence and the real thing is obvious, while what to do about it is not. Of course people's behaviour is influenced by what they see on television and video, but how can such things be controlled in a free society? For a long time this issue did not have to be faced, because the watershed on four television channels and film censorship sifted the vast bulk of people's viewing. But now it is easier for younger and younger people to watch any films that have been made. It is not sex that is the problem, since almost all pornography that is readily available portrays essentially consenting sex (even though the conservative press always likes, irrelevantly, to cite *Crash* in this debate). No, it is violence that we should worry about. There is too much about, and too much finds its way on to the television screen by one means or another.

But the advocates of censorship have always missed the point about the social context of watching violent films. What we watch will only influence what we do if it is reinforced or encour-

aged by people around us, which is a much bigger issue than the responsibility of British television chiefs or Hollywood moguls.

Meanwhile, the news that young people in particular are watching less television should be received with at least two cheers. The odds are that they have found some other more interesting – and probably harmless – way of occupying themselves.

Uneasy riders

If Marlon Brando were to return as an ageing Wild One, he'd be cruising the lanes of North Yorkshire. Most motorcycle accidents there involve middle-aged men riding superbikes in a high-risk search for the thrills of their youth, we report on page 6. These "born again" bikers might have puttered about on a scooter in their youth, but return to two-wheeled transport when they can afford £10,000 high-performance monsters. "They simply go too fast, lose control and hit something," says a Chief Inspector. And one insurance company reports that the 30-60 age group are twice as likely to have an accident as younger riders. So let us pause to salute the responsibility (and good reflexes) of youth.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Change is key to motor car gridlock

Sir: The excellent paper by Friends of the Earth and Christian Wolmar (report, 19 August), and John Prescott's invitation to contribute to ideas for developing an integrated transport policy (report, 22 August), are welcome and long overdue.

The reaction of the motoring organisations is generally cautiously welcoming but the screams of anguish from three-car families (mother from Guildford – "I love my Mercedes" – report, 22 August) and the Association of British Drivers (Letters, 22 August) – "to be able to travel at will is a vital freedom" – are sad.

Do not pedestrians, cyclists and those who do not own cars have equal rights to highway space and to reliable, safe and cost-effective public transport?

The fact that there is not enough road space for everyone and that the message is loud and clear from the Government: "We are not against you owning cars, but we must consider constraining use, particularly where there is congestion, to enable better use of the road space for everyone, and so that buses and other priority users may have some chance of providing a reliable service."

Of course there are essential car users, but how many of the drivers entering and leaving cities in the rush hour or belting around the M25 really need their cars for "work" on a particular day? Are they not just making use of that valuable perk, the free office car park?

Perhaps they should try public transport, lobby for its improvement and, if necessary, plan to alter their lifestyle before they are forced to do so by gridlock. **BERKELEY**
House of Lords
London SW1

Sir: The main problem with traffic is pollution. Delays are annoying, but it is what comes out of a vehicle's exhaust that does the real damage.

Ten per cent of traffic produces about 50 per cent of vehicle pollution (mainly caused by idling). Should we not be hearing from John Prescott a few words on how he intends to reduce that diesel pollution in the current fleet of diesel vehicles?

The technology has been available for a decade to stop toxic diesel soot, yet it sits unused on a shelf due to the lack of will from any government, Tory or Labour. If we submit to Mr Prescott's park and ride we will get rid of lots of cars from our roads but, in their place will be a huge increase in heavy polluting buses that have to be brought into service to meet those demands.

Until diesel exhaust is looked at more carefully, there is no real alternative to the car. **MARTIN WYNNE**
Windermere, Cumbria

Sir: As an inhabitant of the "car capital of Britain" I see no reason why so many should seek to use their cars for so little return. I solved the second car syndrome many years ago. The family car stayed at home.

I took on a new lease of life which I'd thoroughly recommend to anyone, with major benefits to my quality of life, bank account, sanity and timekeeping. My second car became a motorcycle. Using a



series of bikes on which I have since commuted over 50 miles a day in all weathers I leave behind long queues of single-occupant cars in bottlenecks, each car contributing to another's frustration.

My preferred mode of transport is also environmentally friendly, using no more road than necessary, drinking the minimum amount of finite resources, and is parked free outside my office. Not only is it a solution to jamming, it's now fun to commute. **DAVID DIXON**
Guildford, Surrey

Sir: I live in a small village with no shops and no buses. To be here, where I have lived for nearly 20 years, in countryside which is a constant joy, a car is essential.

Increases in fuel and car tax only really deter those like myself on a pension who really can't afford them. To shop and generally join in rural life, most journeys are 10-20 miles round trip. I would gladly drive an electric car, preferably with one solar battery, that is affordable. How many are there with similar needs? One million? Five million?

I don't care about speed or image. I do care about the environment. **SUE ROWAN**
Hopesay, Shropshire

Sir: Surely a first step in reducing car travel would be to limit expenses to petrol costs where reasonable public transport alternatives already exist. Perhaps MPs could lead by example?

MICHAEL DRAKE
Millon Keynes, Buckinghamshire

Proud of exam success

Sir: I am infuriated, in common I am sure with other parents of teenage children and the children themselves by the ritual cry of "lower standards" each year when the exam results are published (report, 24 August). It must be the same people each year who come up with it, and they must have forgotten their own schooldays.

I write as the proud possessor of 14 points at A-level and mother of a daughter (who isn't that much brighter than me) who has a spectacular 28. I was at a respectable academic public school and so was she. I gained a university place and so did she, but there the resemblance ends.

I was taught by whiskered spinsters, and she by highly professional inhabitants of the legal competitive world. Mock exams, predicted grades, exam technique, league tables, parental demands on the school, cut-throat competition for university places, graduate unemployment – all unheard of in my day. And as for working hard, the culture is completely transformed. We revised a little in the summer term, my daughter and her friends have been labouring without ceasing since before Christmas. It is no wonder standards are rising, the critics should be ashamed of themselves, and the successful candidates very proud.

JULIA HOLMAN
London W14

Your leader comment ("These starred As are good news for Britain", 22 August) rightly celebrates the steady improvements in GCSE results over recent years. It was alarming however to read the opinion that the "burden" for schools "need to be raised continuously" so that teachers "never start to believe that they can level off".

The philosophy that "if you're not improving, you're failing" is a tough one to live with. Such demands take no account of the professional and personal needs of the beleaguered teachers. The demands for continually raised standards must be seen in the context of the plummeting level of teacher morale.

The trends are inexorably downwards in levels of support for teachers from parents, communities and the media, in levels of discipline, respect and motivation from pupils, and in levels of funding for schools and salaries. Teachers are required to swim continuously against this tide of decline and are expected to do so in such a way that they actually succeed in reversing it.

The overwhelming majority of teachers would leave the profession tomorrow if they could, and applications for teacher training continue to slump as does the calibre of those that do apply. Will it require a massive crisis in staffing levels before teacher morale is taken seriously? **NEIL STOBART**
Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands

Dual role of MP and MEP

Sir: The Obituary for Sir Tom Norment (14 August) stated that "he was the last Conservative politician to sit at both Westminster and Strasbourg at the same time". Not so.

Currently in the House of Commons, representing the Vale of York, is Miss Anne McIntosh who is also the MEP for North Essex and South Suffolk. Her MEP predecessor was David Curry who for two years also had a dual mandate after being elected as a Westminster MP for Skipton and Ripon. Perhaps both feel there is a close affinity between the counties of Essex and Yorkshire.

Being an MP should be a full-time job, whether it be representing a Westminster constituency or a European one. I cannot see how the needs of both can be fully undertaken by one person simultaneously.

I have to say that I am disappointed because Miss McIntosh has an excellent record and reputation as a hard-working MEP.

She is a pro-Europe Tory, but in her Euro constituency she has had to contend with the antics of the Eurosceptics in her own Party. I wonder if this is why she has decided on a new political career in Yorkshire.

BOB RUSSELL MP
(Colchester, Lib Dem)
House of Commons
London SW1

Parisians are friends in deed

Sir: I am on the side of William Finch in his response to M D Wells (Letters, 22 and 18 August respectively) when it comes to Parisian behaviour.

About a year ago, on the first family visit to Paris, I had my wallet lifted by an expert, who leapt on to a Metro train as the doors were closing. My wife, two daughters and I – fortified by the stereotypical reputation of Parisians – stood in despair on the platform with our bags and our creaking O-level French. We were not prepared for what followed.

Some passers-by had seen what had happened and, while one of them sprinted off to the controllers, to see if the police could hold the train at the next station, others shepherded us to the customer service bureau. Sadly, the police could not reach the train in time but the Metro staff immediately took over, making necessary calls to the various credit card companies, and letting our hotel know that we would be delayed – and all this during the much-loved Parisian lunch hour.

They then looked after our baggage while we took a taxi to the Consulate. Learning of our difficulties, the driver refused the full indicated fare, arguing this was "an expression of sympathy from the people of Paris".

I should be comforted to think that a French family with little English would be afforded the same treatment on the London underground. I wonder why I have such difficulty believing that? **MIKE FUHR**
Reading, Berkshire

Political unrest spreads malaria

Sir: Jeremy Laurance is right to identify malaria as one of mankind's greatest threats ("Malaria defies new drugs to make a comeback", 20 August), but its resurgence worldwide is not simply a question of drug resistance and climatic changes. Political problems are perhaps the major cause of its spread.

In Central Asia, the collapse of the Soviet Union has caused the breakdown of Moscow's central control programme for malaria. Without it, the number of infected mosquitoes has increased unchecked, and the disease has crossed borders between the breakaway states. For the first time since the 1950s, we have seen widespread epidemics in Afghanistan, Azerbaijan and Tajikistan. These countries do not have the resources to create co-ordinated international malaria programmes.

In Africa, huge refugee movements have exposed people to strains of the disease to which they have little natural resistance. For example, thousands of Rwandan refugees, who came from mountainous areas where there were few infective mosquitoes and little malaria, are now scattered across the jungle basin of eastern Congo, where they are highly vulnerable to the deadly *falciparum* malaria. Seventy-five per cent of all refugees we have found in this area are suffering from this strain.

In such situations, we can treat the sick, prioritise vulnerable groups such as young children and pregnant mothers, provide impregnated bednets and spray buildings against mosquitoes. But these are localised strategies. Without political stability, we cannot begin to prevent the spread of the disease across whole continents. **RICHARD ALLEN**
London W1

Consenting life masks

Sir: Jane Wildgoose is in error in describing the National Portrait Gallery's masks of Blake and Keats as "death masks" ("Is it wrong to use a dead body for art?", 18 August). Both were made when the subjects were still living, and, more to the point, consenting participants in the procedure – which cannot be said of the subjects featuring in Anthony-Neel Kelly's artefacts.

(Though to judge from Blake's expression, he was clearly having second thoughts about subjecting himself to the process.) **BARBARA Y BROWN**
London N13

Thatched Dome

Sir: Now that the Millennium Dome roofing contract is being reassessed, why not thatch it ("Millennium Dome may have to move from Greenwich", 24 August)?

Norfolk need would offer at least 25 years of maintenance-free cover. It is an indigenous, environmentally friendly material, a habitat for numerous mammals, insects and birds.

Thatch naturally conforms to the broadest range of roof contours and could be beautifully wicker-stitched around the Blackwall Tunnel ventilation stack.

Why should an American company draw the long straw? **DAVID ROWLANDS**
Chilham, Hampshire

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number. Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk. E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. We regret we are unable to acknowledge unpublished letters.

سكرا من الامن

Oh dear, Mt Clare erupts again

Montserrat has felt the full force of a Clare Short tirade. But this time she's blown it, says John Rentoul

For some weeks now, scientists studying the situation in Montserrat have been warning of an imminent cataclysmic eruption. Last weekend, it happened. The cap of the volcano blew off and the Secretary of State for International Development exploded, releasing a cloud of poisonous adjectives and raining a shower of ridicule on the island's inhabitants and their leaders.

It was not a pretty sight. But we all like Clare Short, precisely because she does not have the personality-crushing self-discipline of most politicians. When she suddenly goes "off message" to expound common sense on the subject of decriminalising cannabis, or lets slip the blindingly obvious about income tax and the better-off, we cheer as she cuts through the waffly evasions of lesser talking heads. She doesn't talk like a politician, and doesn't have a politician's emotional restraint.

And last Saturday, Ms Short was very cross. She had accepted a job at the bottom of the formal rankings of Cabinet status because she believed she could make a difference to the poorest people in the world - the other thing that endears her to us is her moral ambivalence - and here she was being badgered about some Caribbean volcano that the Conservatives had left in a shocking state of disrepair. "It's not our fault that the volcano has blown up," she told journalists through gritted teeth.

What really annoyed her was that, having risked upsetting Gordon Brown by setting a target of halving world poverty, she was now being criticised for handing out a measly £2,500 a head to resettle Montserratians. But did she smile sweetly and praise the fortune of the homeless locals? She did not. Baroness Chalker, her predecessor, would have been flinching briskly through the ash, listening with intent concern to the inhabitants. But Clare Krakatoa stayed in London and let rip.

'It's not our fault the volcano has blown up,' she told journalists

"It would be weak politics if I said: 'They are making a noise and a row, oh dear, give them more money.' They say 10,000, double, treble, and then think of another number. It will be golden elephants next."

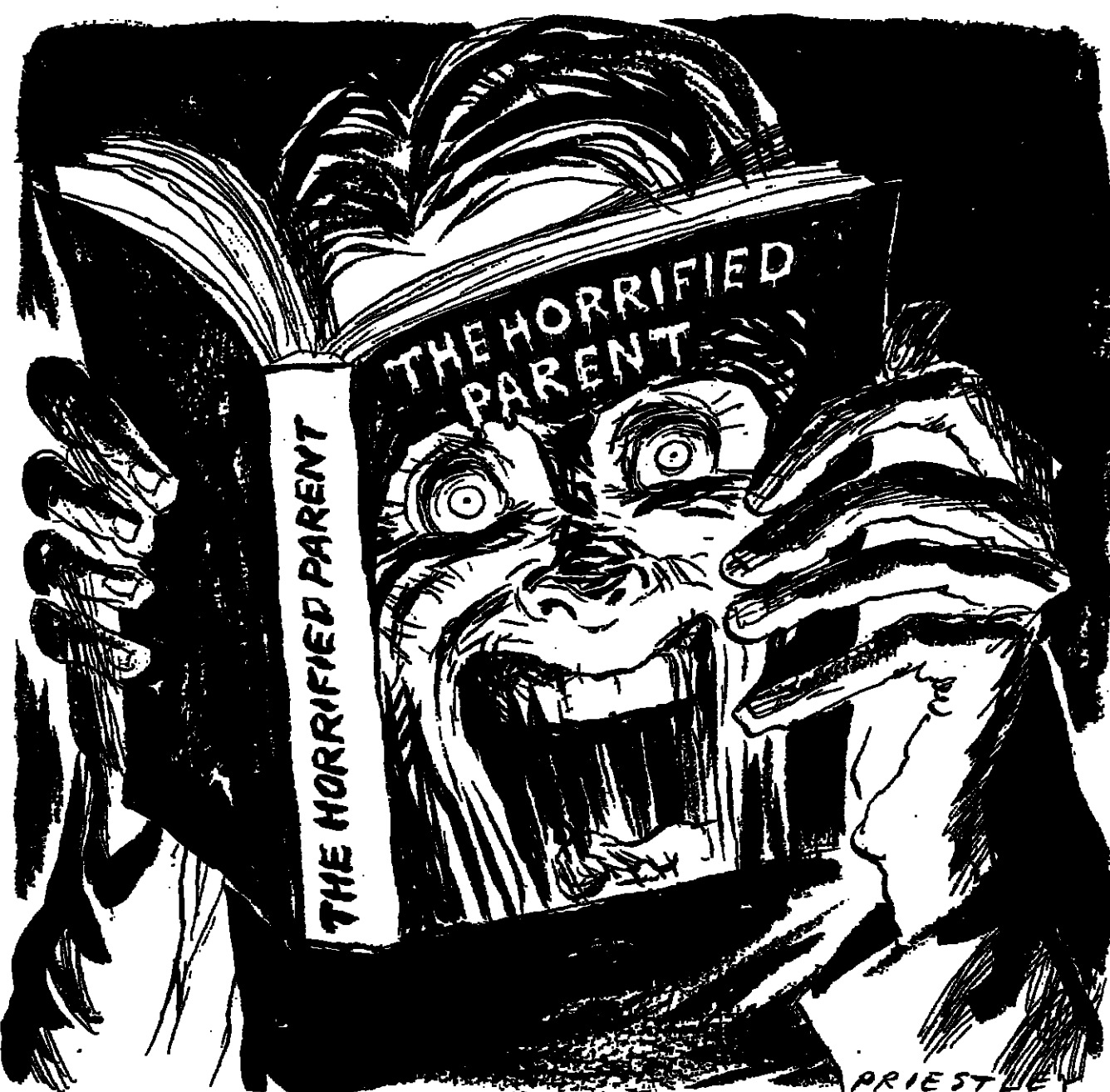
It was the golden elephants that did it. A vivid, headline-writer's phrase, one that Alisdair Darling or Margaret Beckett would never, ever use. Not in front of journalists anyway. And journalists love the spectacle of great forces of nature at work: here was Mount Short, dormant for so many months (some even thought extinct), chucking lava, ash and smoke into the upper atmosphere.

The other attractive thing about Ms Short is that she has a point. "My department's budget is designed to help the poorest people on the Earth, and I have to be very responsible about how it is spent," she said. "We have lots of obligations to much poorer people in other parts of the world." There, she had the beginnings of a plausible case. That is always the moralist's clincher. The "Do you really need 50p more than she does?" argument. But then, being human as well as moral, she spoiled it.

"This is about a dependency culture. It is the duty of the Government to make these people safe and help them find viable livelihoods. People in Britain would not understand why we should do more than that... When there are floods in Wales or in Scotland, people lose all their possessions, but even if they have no insurance they receive very little help." From St Clare of the Sackcloth to Lady Short of Responsible Government in three sentences. Montserrat's leaders "have to stop this game," she said. "It is bad governance." (The last time we heard that word was in the bulky, self-justificatory memoirs of Harold Wilson.) More than that, if these foreigners for whom she was accidentally responsible went on playing these "silly political games," she was going to take her bat away and not send her junior minister George Foulkes to the island, because there would be "no point holding talks".

She was fed up; she is human; she could not help herself. That is why we like her. She is not a modern political robot who goes in front of the camera and reads soundbites off her pager. But to read soundbites off her pager, on taking out her political frustrations on a bunch of homeless Caribbeaners for whom her government is responsible - and yet who do not have British passports - that is a bit much.

Last year *The Independent* launched a "Save Clare Short Campaign", to protest at Tony Blair's brutal and unnecessary humiliation of her, in denoting her from the transport portfolio. It's her from someone to launch a new campaign: to save Clare Short from herself.



Why young readers turn to little horrors

by Ruth Padel

"It's simple," said Gary at the kids' publishing party. "Girls stop reading after 11, and boys after eight. Unless."

"Unless they get into horror. The largest market for Stephen King in this country is 14-year-old girls."

I remember a friend whose eldest daughter, aged seven, brought home from school a Walker's reading book called *The Burning Baby and Other Stories*. Walker's? Oh, yes, original, imaginative, subtle. Genies like Jill Murphy, masterpieces like *Peace at Last*. You can't go wrong.

But you can. In the first story, a garage mechanic got a 14-year-old (presumably not wise to Stephen King) pregnant. To hide his crime he decided - what else? - to burn her to death. The narrator, another girl, watched as her friend died, then saw something rise from the flames. Of course - the burning focus. Sort of thing you recognise instantly. It made for the mechanic in petrol-stained overalls. He too went up in flames. End of story.

When Becka asked "What's a fetus?", her dad took a look, and then the shit hit the egg whisk. Two relaxed parents, not run-of-the-mill book-burners, went up in smoke. First they faxed nice, sweet Walker Books, to say their daughter was reading this book with no target age on the cover: who was it for? Then they marched, book in hand, to the poor school.

The school was aghast. Couldn't think how it got there. It had celest its way past the woman-who-puts-cellophane-on-the-covers. Had they given this by someone who worked in a secondary school? As upset as the parents, they exploded with apologies. But Walker's return fax said: "We hope your daughter enjoyed our book. It is intended for the teenage market, as the cover picture makes clear." Well, said my friend, it didn't. A handy teenager might have realised, but not a seven-year-old.

"All kids' publishers do that," said Gary. "Scholastic's ad for a Kids' Story Competition (run by *The Independent* a few years ago) said: 'Children often like stories surprisingly old for

them. Write us such a story.' But they stuff Waterstones with 'Point Horror'. We're all at it. We sell sophisticated writing, witty images, subtlety, and the cream of British imagination - John Burningham, Posy Simmonds - to three- and four-year-olds, then turn them into zombies with this stuff. It's called teenage, but it's really eight and over."

Gary got a bit carried away, but genius, imagination and sophistication really do growl the three-to-five section of any Waterstones. And then:

"Do you know," asked Gary, "how 'teenage series' get written? My boss tells me to create a formula: say, three girls who find something wrong and sort it out. I work it out 10 times over, invent an 'author', hire 10 hacks at a flat fee, tell them what to write (names, plot, everything), design 10

'We sell sophisticated writing and the cream of British imagination to four-year-olds, then make them into zombies with this stuff'

covers with the same look - and 10 books end up on sale all exactly alike. No originality, no integrity, no imagination, no language, no -

"Take another Chardonnay," I said.

I don't mind the horror in itself. When my daughter was eight I idiotically tried her on *Beowulf*. After three pages it was nightmares for a month. Not because it was horror, but because it was well-written and alive. What gets me is the pornographic formulaicness, the nonwriterness, of these things. My daughter's last school had a fab reading policy. You had to have a book on the go all the time. But you could bring your own. Heartlessly, I made her bring what she called "old" books. Her friends had "modern" ones. I produced new paperbacks: *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, Italo Calvino's *Fairy Tales*. She adored both, but they weren't "modern". Friends lent her "Point Horror" secretly, out of pity.

I hit back. A book, I announced, is something written by a real person, who wanted to write exactly that book, and put special things into it. Words and imagining special to that book. These objects are things-that-look-like-books, by people with made-up names.

Scholastic's "Point Horror" and "Point Romance" vary the authorial names. "Goosebumps" are all "by R L Stine", whose name crops up on "Fear Street" (Simon and Schuster) too. Hippo's "Babysitters" are all "by Anne M Martin". On the inside cover, you don't find "by the same author," but "titles in the same series". No personal fingerprint or language or voice, no quirks or aliveness, in any of them.

Why do kids read? It used to be, partly, to find out how the world works. You get that now from magazines, TV, CD-Roms and the Internet (updated every 15 seconds). But you can't read the Internet under the bedclothes, or up a tree. Gutenberg got you that. I think you read to increase the things you find value in. You can't find value in things-that-look-like-books. My poetry editor used to sleep with favourite books - Kipling, *The Borrowers* - under his pillow. These have now turned into uncool, off-putting objects known as "classics".

A new Radio 3 programme called *Reading Around* starts this Saturday, with funding for a five-minute spot each week on "classics". They are calling it their "Guilt List". It introduces you to something you feel bad about not having read. *The Iliad*. Proust. Ace presenter, ace producer: sharp, witty, searching; the programme should go down a treat. But why a "guilt-list"?

Behind that guilt is an assumption that Scholastic, Hippo and Co are now applying to kids, and which the kids are going to apply to everything else. It also governs adult music categories: things like "Classics for Pleasure". It goes like this. Classics, or anything written with real care and energy, are good for you. But unless we load them with sweeteners they are really a pain. You ought to read *The Iliad*, like you ought to eat carrots. But God, it's a drag. Let's go for junk instead.

Carnival doesn't have to end today

At dusk tonight, the cacophony of tin whistles and calypso will fade to a murmur, marking the end of the 33rd Notting Hill Carnival. The steel drums will be packed up, the sound systems dismantled and the glittering costumes taken off to be mothballed.

The sights, sounds and atmosphere of the biggest carnival outside Rio de Janeiro will endure only in the memories of the masqueraders and spectators, and in snapshots taken by a few amateur photographers. The music and pageantry of previous years, meanwhile, live on just as hazy recollections.

Astonishing though it seems, this annual explosion of creativity and folk art is not immortalised in any museum or archive. There is no official record of an event that spans more than three decades and is now firmly embedded in the nation's cultural life. Bits and pieces have been conserved by a handful of individuals. The Museum of London has accumulated a few things, piecemeal. But there exists no comprehensive collection of photographs

and video footage that capture the spectacle and exuberance of Carnival, of audio tapes that record its musical heartbeat, of leaflets and posters that document its history.

And most lamentable, the costumes that are the dazzling focal point of the parade have not been preserved. These elaborate and fantastical concoctions, months in the design and making, are works of art and are richly evocative of Carnival's Caribbean roots. Yet they are on show for just two days over the August Bank Holiday and then stored in warehouses, by the 50 mas (costume) bands, to be dismantled and recycled in future years.

Recently the Museum of London hosted a conference on the question of establishing a Carnival archive. The participants - who included the Notting Hill organisers as well as members of mas and music bands and representatives of the London Arts Board - were enthusiastic, and decided that a survey was needed to establish what had been kept over the decades.

The wonder is that the idea has

never come up before. Carnival, after all, is a popular art form at which Britain excels. Notting Hill not only attracts more than two million visitors over two days, but it is acknowledged as one of the top three carnivals - together with Rio and Trinidad - in the quality of its performance art and creative talent.

Notting Hill is also distinctive in being the most cosmopolitan of carnivals. The dancers, musicians and masqueraders hail from around the world: this year, there are groups from Afghanistan, Kurdistan, Bangladesh and the Philippines, as well as African and South American countries.

One reason for the failure to establish an archive before now must be the ambivalence that characterises public perceptions of Carnival. In the early years, when a few thousand Trinidadians paraded along Portobello Road in west London accompanied by steel drums, it was regarded as a quaint folk festival, at best. After the riot between black youths and police in 1976, it became a metaphor for violence and thereafter was seen principally as a

public order problem. Despite the growth of Carnival into a major international event that reflects London's rich cultural diversity, both these impressions linger. Carnival also represents much that is alien to the British temperament: large crowds of people taking over the streets, ethnic communities giving powerful expression to their artistic identity, noise, colour, anarchy, vibrancy.

Other cities recognise the value of Carnival. Rio and Port of Spain, Trinidad's capital, have major museums devoted to its Mardi Gras. The Museum of London is willing to house a Notting Hill archive, but a dedicated space would be preferable. The problem, of course, is funding. This year's official Carnival guide contains a goodwill message from Chris Smith, MP. The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport should put his money where his mouth is. A Carnival centre would be a project to match his grandiose title.

Kathy Marks

It's a cricket ball, I think ... Let's look at that again

The Test Match Special team on BBC Radio are treated as very special people by all those who care about such things, but even they are not perfect.

Sometimes, for instance, they don't know what's going on. You know they don't know what's going on because they say things like, "Well, I'm not quite sure what happened there," or "Well, I don't know if that was bat or pad or bat and pad," or "Was that a tickle there? Might well have been," and you can't blame them, because it's bad enough trying to keep an eye on the double-decker buses passing by or the seagulls flying around or the people watching from adjacent

cranes without having to monitor the cricket as well. Television is different. TV cricket broadcasts can go on for minutes on end without anyone saying anything, and when someone comes back in the commentary box and says something, the viewer can get quite a shock.

But on radio, what with the strain of describing buses and seagulls, reading out letters and laughing a lot, no wonder that commentators sometimes lose their grip on actuality. What generally happens is that one of the *Test Match Special* team says something like, "Well, let's have a look at that one again," which is a curious thing to say on radio, until you realise they are going to look at it again on TV. They are going to look at a slow-motion video replay on TV. The radio commentators are, in fact, watching the cricket match at which they are present on television.

We all accept this because everyone nowadays watches things on TV and expects instant replays. If you go to a live match after weeks of watching TV sport, you get a shock when a goal is scored or a wicket falls and there is no instant replay. Instant replays are now part of our lives, allowing us to relive the second-hand moment sprawled in front of the screen.

However, there is also a belief, fostered partly by the *Test Match Special* team, that if you see it again, you will see what really happened. This is absolutely untrue. Slow-motion replays make things no clearer at all. How often have we seen a disputed line call at Wimbledon shown in slow motion, and heard the commentators say, "Well, it seemed like a small cloud of chalk - it was certainly close to the line, but it was a hard one to call." How often have we seen a replay of a disputed



Miles Kington

rugby try and heard the commentator conclude that nobody could really say if it was grounded or not.

There was a good example during the last day's play of the late Test match, when one of the umpire's decisions depended on whether the ball had hit the batsman's bat or foot. The ball definitely hit something bang in front of the stumps and went flying off down the leg side. Everyone appealed. He was given out, lbw. This would have been a fair verdict if the ball had hit his foot, but quite unjust if it had gone off his bat. So we saw the incident again from different angles, in slow motion, and it was impossible to tell if it had hit the ball or the foot. One of the TV commentators said that he didn't think the ball would have gone off at that angle from a bat, which struck me as ridiculous. The plain simple fact was that the video replay made things no clearer at all.

About all you can say for the TV view of cricket is that it is slightly better than watching it in the flesh. Spectators at a cricket match must have very good eyesight to see what is going on at all. If you are sideways on to the match, you cannot even see a fast ball being bowled. You can see the bowler fling his arm, and you see the batsman react but you cannot see the ball at all. I have a friend called Nick who has a theory that it would be quite easy to play most of a Test match without a ball, as long as the players were competent at miming. The bowler would bowl an imaginary ball, the batsman would swipe viciously at thin air and a fielder would fling himself heroically into empty space, and it wouldn't look so very different from what goes on now.

So when it comes down to it, I can see only one use of the cricket TV slow-motion replay. It may not show you what happened to the ball, or whether it struck bat or pad, but it does prove that a cricket ball is actually being used.

Chronometer, Watch and Nautical Instrument Maker to the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty

Spoil yourself with the gift of time.

For your FREE brochures containing over 150 Watches, Chronometers, Clocks, Barometers and Barographs complete the coupon or phone on:

0151 708 0099 Quote ref: 102507

Or fax us on: 0151 708 6777, we will do the rest.

Sewills Makers to the Admiralty - Estd 1800ad - CORNHILL HOUSE, 24 CORNHILL, LIVERPOOL, L1 8DZ

Please send your colour brochure to me Name: (Mr/Mrs/Ms.) Address: Postcode:

obituaries / gazette

Sir Eric Gairy

Sir Eric Gairy, Prime Minister of Grenada 1974-79, died at his home at Grand Anse on the south coast of the island he loved and tyrannised.

The wall-eyed Don Juan in the white suit, Gairy was one of the last of a generation of West Indian labour leaders who challenged the colonial plantocracy on behalf of their union members and eventually took political independence for their islands from the hands of successive British governments. Labour and Conservative, who were all too eager to get shot of the Caribbean encumbrances of empire.

The Antilles had long since lost that economic importance that their monopoly of sugar production gave them in the 18th century when Britain would bleed France to death for such patches of land as Grenada, St Lucia or Dominica.

Gairy was also one of the worst of that generation, a rotten apple in a barrel which included such large and often great figures as Alexander Bustamante and the Manleys in Jamaica, the Adams in Barbados, Eric Williams in Trinidad and Tobago, Robert Bradshaw in St Kitts and Ebenezer Joshua in St Vincent.

Gairy was born to a peasant family in 1922 in St Andrew's parish and was educated at the Catholic parish school in a strongly Catholic island. Early in his working life he emigrated to the Standard Oil refinery on the industrialised Dutch island of Aruba in search of the betterment his own island could not offer him.

He returned with a

vengeance and in the 1950s set out to mangle and ridicule the conventions of the colonial establishment based in the capital St George's, in order to teach his growing number of followers self-respect.

In 1950 he founded the Grenada Manual and Mental Workers Union and later the Grenada United Labour Party (GULP) which aimed to roll back the deference that the people's former leader Theophilus Maryshow exhibited to the colonial masters and their susceptible wives.

For instance, on one occasion, Gairy led a terrified group of estate workers into a tourist hotel, where they demanded to be served a meal. He went on to incite domestic servants to revolt against a regime which required them to work 15 hours a day. They loved him.

As the historian Gordon K. Lewis put it in his magisterial *Growth of the Modern West Indies*, "... while the St George's respectability shuddered, the rural masses applauded each Gairyite indiscretion: the gaudy vanity of his appearances at meetings of the Standing Federation Committee, his enjoyment of his various secretaries as physical architecture rather than clerical aid, his preening self-esteem."

When in 1951 the Governor had Gairy put on a boat to the sister island of Carriacou, crowds blocked the roads and rioted till the Royal Navy was called and police reserves summoned from as far afield as Jamaica.

Scarcely had the union been born in 1950 than Gairy had

himself elected to the Legislative Council, starting a career which was to lead him in 1957 to be the Chief Minister and Minister of Finance of the newly independent island (where his peccolator or "squander-mania" caused him to be dismissed and the constitution abrogated by the authorities in 1962).

He returned triumphant as Premier five years later in 1967, staying on Grenada's independence in 1974 to be its first Prime Minister.

His period in office showed the darker side of the playboy with a gleam in his eye for the ladies. He charmed his constituents when helping Jennifer Hosten (Miss Grenada) win the Miss World competition in London in 1970, but his publicity exploits were overshadowed by his ruthless authoritarianism. This was enforced by his MongOOSE Gang of thugs at whose hands no one on Grenada was safe. He took to saying, "He who opposes me opposes God".

In April 1973 the police killed a young protester. Further blood flowed that year as the labour movement went against him, and on 7 February 1974 the island went to independence, marked by an electricity black-out caused by striking power workers and by hunger strikes against Gairyism.

The chaos gave impetus to the growing nationalist and left-wing strength of a movement which was eventually to oust him. He fought back, seeking support from the most unlikely and disreputable sources, including General Augusto

Pinchet, the dictator of Chile, who sent Gairy the arms he could not get from anywhere else.

As his brutality and extravagances continued the New Jewel Movement (NJM), an amalgam of young social democrats and Leninist politicians, grew in strength, led by the remarkable Maurice Bishop whose father Rupert had been murdered by Gairy's men.

In March 1979 the NJM took advantage of his departure from the country for the UN General Assembly where he was striving to have flying saucers put on the agenda and ousted him.

Eric Gairy was not at hand when the NJM attempted to turn Grenada into a socialist state though, full of hope, he did seek the assistance of the British embassy in Washington for his reinstatement when the revolutionaries fell to feuding among themselves in 1983. He was still in US exile when Ronald Reagan launched his blizzarding invasion of Grenada a few days later. He returned to fight elections in 1984, 1990 and 1995 but his magic had left him.

Hugh O'Shaughnessy

Eric Matthew Gairy, politician: born 18 February 1922; Member of Legislative Council, Grenada 1951-52 and 1954-55; Minister of Trade and Production 1956-57; Chief Minister and Minister of Finance 1957-62; Premier 1967-74; Prime Minister of Grenada 1974-79; Ki 1977; PC 1977; married 1949 Cynthia Gairy (two daughters); died Grand Anse, Grenada 23 August 1997.



'He who opposes me opposes God': Gairy at Heathrow in 1970, on his way back to Grenada after choosing Miss Grenada as Miss World

Professor Charles Gray

Charles Gray was a distinguished biochemist who contributed greatly to the science of chemical pathology. His chief fields of work were in the abnormal metabolism of the bile pigments, porphyrins and adrenal corticosteroids.

In the United Kingdom he was a pioneer in the application of modern methods for the measurement of bilirubin and other breakdown products of haemoglobin. This work contributed greatly to the introduction of practical procedures that could be used in hospital laboratories to help sort out the clinical problems of differentiating the causes of jaundice.

Collaboration with Albert Neuberger, working on the metabolism of porphyrin and its rare inherited disorders, the porphyrias (from which George III is believed to have suffered), stemmed from his studies of bile pigments in human disease. His team, using modern techniques, added significantly to the ability of the laboratory to identify the varieties of the porphyrias, putting the management of these cases on a more rational basis.

He introduced a number of practical chemical procedures for the investigation of diseases of the adrenal cortex which were ahead of their time but were of limited value and were superseded without coming into general use, although

they contributed at the time to a greater understanding of these rare disorders.

Trained as a chemist at Imperial College, London, Gray moved on to physiology at University College London with a Bursary-Stirling Scholarship in Physiology and Biochemistry in 1952. This was followed in 1953 by a demonstratorship in biochemistry and then a lecturer post in physiology at UCL, which provided him with a salary, although meagre, enabling him to study medicine at the same time as continuing his work on bile pigments. He completed his qualifications in medicine in 1957.

The following year his research was of sufficient distinction for him to be invited to follow R.A. McCance as Biochemist at King's College Hospital Medical School in London. During the Second World War Gray saw service in charge of the Sector 9 Biochemical Laboratory in the Emergency Health Service. In 1948, he was given a personal chair in Chemical Pathology in London University, which he held at King's College Hospital, where he was the consultant chemical pathologist until he retired in 1976.

During those years, he built a strong research team which were of limited value and were superseded without coming into general use, although

some of his funding from major industrial drug companies - rather an innovation at the time. He was very friendly with his overseas research colleagues, so that his department, though often modest in resource compared with theirs, was a favourite place for sabbatical research.

During the years he was in charge of chemical pathology at King's College Hospital, there were great changes in the provision of laboratory services which grew to provide a wide range of investigative tools to help elucidate clinical problems in diagnosis and in the management of patients. Many of the repetitive analyses, previously performed by hand, were transferred to automated machines, allowing the investigation of individual patients on a scale that could not have been imagined at the time that he was appointed.

Finally, he saw the introduction into laboratory practice of computers that slowly but surely enabled the more effective use of such machines. He saw clearly that such advances allowed his skilled technical and scientific staff to spend more time undertaking manually the more complex analytical procedures that, though needed less frequently, were the sharp end of a hospital clinical laboratory's work. Many of these methods found their way from the

research benches of the laboratory to the routine side of the department.

Charles Gray was a very reserved, though determined, man who did not easily make friends with his clinical colleagues. Nevertheless, he was widely respected for his firmly-held views on the importance of the scientific basis of medicine, and for the scientific reputation of his department that, at a time when resources for research were difficult to obtain, added lustre to the medical school.

He was a very conscientious head of department who liked to maintain close contacts with his staff. In more spacious times it was his custom to walk round the entire department first thing in the morning talking to every individual, from the senior to the most junior, asking how his or her work was progressing, giving advice and encouragement as he went.

He was a clear thinker and he wrote well, so that he was in considerable demand in later years for committee work and editorial responsibilities. He was for a period a member of the Clinical Research Board of the Medical Research Council; chairman of the research committee of the Arthritis and Rheumatism Council; member of the council of the Royal College of Pathologists. His editorial duties included the

chair of the Committee of Management of the Journal of Endocrinology, and membership of the Editorial Board of the Biochemical Journal. He was for a time Secretary of the Society of Endocrinology, and in 1969 was elected President of the Association of Clinical Biochemists.

He wrote numerous scientific articles with his research associates, and a number of books which were standard texts in their time. Among his best-known books are an encyclopaedic work, *Hormones in Blood* (1961), and a small early work, *The Bile Pigments* (1953). A handbook of chemical pathology, *Clinical Chemical Pathology* (1953), for medical students that was also widely used as a primer for trainees in his field was very



Gray: porphyrin studies

popular; it saw a number of editions and was translated into several languages.

In 1976, the year he retired, he was appointed Emeritus Professor of Chemical Pathology in the University of London. Needing to remain intellectually active, he continued with editions of two of his books and readily accepted an invitation to be the acting head of the Chemical Pathology Department at the Hospital for Sick Children, in Great Ormond Street, when Dame Barbara Clayton left to take up her chair in Southampton. He spent several happy years continuing his porphyrin studies and working on further editions of his books as a visiting professor at the Medical Research Council Clinical Research Centre based at Northwick Park Hospital.

Michael Rinsler

Charles Horace Gray, biochemist: born Erit, Kent 30 June 1911; Consultant, King's College Hospital District 1938-76; Consulting Chemical Pathologist 1976-81; Professor of Chemical Pathology, London University 1948-76 (Emeritus); Honorary Consultant, Miles Laboratories Ltd 1953-76; Visiting Professor, Division of Clinical Chemistry, MRC Clinical Research Centre, Harrow 1976-83; married 1938 Jessie Widdup (two sons); died Leatherhead, Surrey 15 August 1997.

Tete Montoliu

Unlike the greatest jazz pianist of all, Art Tatum, who was born partially-sighted, Tete Montoliu was completely blind at birth. Having negotiated this handicap with extraordinary success, he was then stricken with deafness in his last years.

Because of the Civil War and the Second World War, Spain was practically a jazz desert from 1936 to 1947, the only oasis for the fan being the 78rpm records by American bands issued on the La Voz de su Amo label. Montoliu learned his jazz mostly at second hand from these. He listened to records by Art Tatum, Earl Hines and Bud Powell, the most challenging players of them all, and modelled his own style carefully from their performances. Throwing in a dash of Thelonious Monk and Wynton Kelly later on, he developed his playing into a unique and typically European interpretation of the great American music.

Montoliu's father was a professional oboist who played with the Barcelona Opera Or-

chestra and in the local brass band. He also led a dance band. Montoliu's mother was a jazz fan who played records by Fats Waller and Duke Ellington. The boy learned to read music in Braille when he was seven and began playing in local jazz groups when he was 12. He began classical studies at Barcelona Conservatory when he was 13. In that same year, 1946, he began playing locally with the expatriate American tenor saxophonist Don Byas. In those days a frequent visitor to Barcelona.

Like the Frenchman Martial Solal, and perhaps as a parallel to Django Reinhardt on the guitar, the European Montoliu developed into a much more extensively talented player than most of the Americans. Unlike Solal, he broke little new ground, but he had an almost superhuman technique and fashioned his bebop improvisations at phenomenal speed. He used mostly standard material - superior popular tunes and jazz compositions, but con-

trived to make each performance fresh and sparkling. From time to time he made use of his native Catalan folk themes.

His career was boosted when, at the end of a 1955 concert by the Lionel Hampton band in Barcelona, he came up on stage and played a set with the vibraphone player. Hampton was so impressed that he had Montoliu play on an album he recorded for Spanish RCA a day or so later. The Spaniard began his own recording career in 1958, and a prolific stream of albums ensued until the early Nineties when he became ill. He first left Spain in 1958 to appear at the Cannes Jazz Festival with an American rhythm section. Subsequently he played with the then free-form tenor sax player Archie Shepp in Copenhagen from 1963 to 1964, although Montoliu himself was dismissive of the idiom.

"Free jazz doesn't exist," he said. "It's just an excuse for musicians who don't know how to play the blues or even their in-

struments." However, in 1974 he recorded two more albums with the saxophonist Anthony Braxton, an enfant terrible at the avant-garde gate.

Before that Tete Montoliu had visited major European cities including London to play with American giants like Dexter Gordon, Kenny Dorham, Ben Webster, Lucky Thompson and Roland Kirk. He worked as a soloist at the Top of the Gate in New York in 1967 and from there worked often in the United States. His reputation blossomed further as he led a succession of potent trios which included the bassists George Mraz or Neils-Henning Ørsted Pedersen and the drummers Al "Tootie" Heath or Al Foster from the mid-Seventies until the end of his career in the mid-Nineties.

Steve Voce

Vincent "Tete" Montoliu Masana, pianist: born Barcelona 28 March 1933; married Monserrat Garcia-Albesa; died Barcelona 24 August 1997.

Dungkar Losang Trinley

China's much-vaunted "liberation" and "modernisation" of Tibet since 1950 is a process in which no more than a handful of Tibetan intellectuals have played a significant part, and these few have retained their positions only through the exercise of deft diplomacy and the sacrifice of most of their principles. Tibet's accredited representatives under Chinese occupation are reviled and attacked to this day, by the Communist party as "rightists", and by Tibetan exiles as "collaborators".

Dungkar Losang Trinley was one of those figures. He attained excellence in the monastic system of traditional learning as a young man, embraced the constructive synthesis of Buddhist philosophy and modern scientific method, and later emerged from the phenomenal destruction and chaos of the Cultural Revolution as Tibet's leading historian, and a coherent and committed advocate of modern Tibetan-language mass education. He inspired a generation of young Tibetan students in the "minority nationalities" institutes of higher education during the "liberalisation" of the 1980s, but lost favour with China's leaders after the re-introduction of "leftist" assimilationist policy in Tibet in 1992, a movement which currently seems prepared to annul his main hopes for the future.

Born in 1927 in the south-eastern district of Konqpo, Dungkar Losang Trinley was recognised as the eighth reincarnate Rinpoche (or Lama) of the nearby dung dkar ("white couch") monastery at the age of four, and entered the great monastery of Sera shortly after. By the age of 20, he was appointed disciplinarian at Lhasa's prestigious Lower Tantric college, and 10 years later in 1957, on the eve of Tibet's final capitulation, he graduated as a Geshe Lha-ram-pa, the highest degree in monastic education. He is said to have been able to memorise every night as many pages of loose-leaf text as could be pierced with a single needle, and to have developed expertise in such "lesser sciences" as poetics and astrology, in addition to the canon of Buddhist philosophy and logic.

In 1958, he was sent to work in higher education in mainland China, to begin teaching an entire generation of young Tibetan aristocrats and religious dignitaries: he thus escaped involvement in the 1959 Lhasa uprising and its brutal suppression, but shortly thereafter he denounced the "old society", gave up his vows and married.

The ex-Rinpoche remained at the Central Institute of Nationalities in Peking until the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution, when many Tibetans of his status were sent back and required to perform manual labour in the countryside. He spent much of the period 1966-76 digging dykes and canals in the Tolu valley near Lhasa where he was subjected to vicious "class struggle" like everyone else, but is also remembered by colleagues for unheroically denouncing others, a stigma which stayed with him to his death.

Reprieve came after Mao's death, and by 1978 Dungkar had married his second wife Pema Yu-dron, and returned to Peking as lecturer and researcher in Tibetan studies. Over the next five years he brought a number of historical studies to completion, including *The Merging of Religious and Secular Rule in Tibet* (1981; published in English in 1991), a critique of the traditional theocratic state, for which he is best known, and imparted his enthusiasm for the rejuvenation of classical learning through Marxist and social scientific methods of analysis to a new generation of students, including the now prominent US-based journalist Tse-ten Vangchuk Sharilo and the east Tibetan poet Dondrup Gyal.

Although Dungkar offended many compatriots with his study of Tibetan history based on "class struggle", a closer examination reveals a serious historical work, clothed in the garb of political acceptability, but nonetheless uninhibited by the taboos traditionally imposed on historiography. Later, even the exile government acquiesced to its publication. Similarly, students recall that his classes were packed to capacity once it was learned that Dungkar was given to making

devastatingly frank judgements on Sino-Tibetan affairs, expressed as barbed comments, the humour of which apparently helped him escape censure.

One of the only people who actually read Marx in Tibetan translation, Dungkar was totally committed to the transition to modernity chiefly to ensure the survival of Buddhism and classical Tibetan culture. He had taught himself Chinese - largely from the study of Mao's Little Red Book - just as a lame dog will jump a high wall to escape its persecutors.

Others remember that, when Chinese students attended his classes, he would give long discourses on the evils of intellectual theft; he apparently put years of study into the newly accessible Dunhuang manuscripts dealing with Tibet's imperial past, but little of the work was ever published under his name.

Dungkar's return to Lhasa in 1983 coincided with the high tide of Tibetan cultural reconstruction in which he was an important figure. One of his central aims was realised the following year with the establishment of "Tibet University", of which he was appointed vice-principal and professor of history.

In 1987 he was awarded the honour of *Guojiajiao* ("National Scholar" in Chinese), apparently sealing his career with official approval, but the re-



Dungkar: barbed comments

awakened aspirations of those years proved short-lived; following the suppression of nationalist protest in 1987-89 and the growing international confidence of the regime, Tibet policy turned decisively in favour of mainland immigration and rapid industrialisation after 1992, and the promotion of the Tibetan language and education was replaced with official mistrust and contempt. An uncoloured honour proffered by the International Association of Tibet Studies in 1992 seems to have further weakened his acceptability to the party.

At a talk during his visit to the United Kingdom in 1992, he declared, "All hope in our future ... and the protection of our heritage depends upon bi-lingual higher education. Without educated people in all fields expressing themselves in their own language, Tibetans are in danger of being assimilated. We have reached a crucial point."

In 1993, he resigned from the Committee on Tibetan Language, whose own status was greatly reduced, and the following year his National Scholar award is believed to have been (unusually) withdrawn. Refusal to participate in the 1995 dispute over recognition of the eleventh Panchen Rinpoche as well as the current "Patriotic Re-education" campaign in Tibet's monasteries further soured relations with his political masters. The fact that no official obituary has yet been published would seem to confirm this.

Many conservative compatriots of his generation will remember Dungkar as a collaborator, and even a coward, but for those who knew him better, colleagues and students, he was a person of unusual conviction, courage and kindness. Behind the politically acceptable facade was a scholar and teacher whose informed concern for his people and his country remained unchanged throughout his life.

He passed away at a dark hour in the struggle for Tibetan cultural identity, and we can only pray that Dungkar Rinpoche, despite his dismissal of the institution of reincarnation, will swiftly return to continue his efforts.

Matthew Akester

Dungkar Losang Trinley, Tibetan scholar: born Konqpo, Tibet 1927; recognised 1931, as Dungkar Rinpoche; twice married (two sons, one daughter); died Los Angeles 21 July 1997.



Montoliu: superhuman technique Photograph: Fin Costello / Redferns

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In Memoriam) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, telephoned to 0171-293 2011 (24-hour answering machine 0171-293 2012) or faxed to 0171-293 2010, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements (weddings, funerals, obituaries, marriages, divorces) must be submitted in writing (or faxed) and are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.

The Independent's main switchboard number is 0171-293 2000.

Birthdays

Mr Martin Amis, novelist, 48; Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Amis, former commander, Royal College of Defence Studies, 67; Mr Tony Armstrong, television presenter, 46; Mr Jonathan Ashley-Smith, conservationist, 51; Mr Sikander Bakht, cricketer, 40; Mr Conrad Black, judge, 53; Sir Donald Logan, High Court judge, 80; Dr Colin Lucas, Master of Balliol College, and Vice-Chancellor, Oxford University, 57; Lord McGregor of Durris, former chairman, Press Complaints Commission, 76; Mr Brian Moore, novelist, 76; Mr Bryan Mosley, actor, 66; Mr Richard Mvir, ambassador to Oman, 55; Miss Margaret Rothwell, ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire, Niger and Burkina, 59; Sir Crispin Tickell, Warden of Green College, Oxford, and Vice-President, Royal Geographical Society, 67; Mrs Nancy Trenaman, former Principal, St Anne's College, Oxford, 78; Mr James Wallace MP, 43; Professor Anne Warner, physiologist, 57.

Gardner, broadcaster, 65; Professor Peter Gray, former Master of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, 71; Viscount Hardinge, banker, 41; Mr Van Johnson, actor, 80; Mr Karl Korne, composer, 69; Sir Andrew Longmore, High Court judge, 53; Sir Donald Logan, Master of Balliol College, and Vice-Chancellor, Oxford University, 57; Lord McGregor of Durris, former chairman, Press Complaints Commission, 76; Mr Brian Moore, novelist, 76; Mr Bryan Mosley, actor, 66; Mr Richard Mvir, ambassador to Oman, 55; Miss Margaret Rothwell, ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire, Niger and Burkina, 59; Sir Crispin Tickell, Warden of Green College, Oxford, and Vice-President, Royal Geographical Society, 67; Mrs Nancy Trenaman, former Principal, St Anne's College, Oxford, 78; Mr James Wallace MP, 43; Professor Anne Warner, physiologist, 57.

Anniversaries

Births: Ivan IV ("The Terrible"), Tsar of Russia, 1530; Narcisse Virgilio Diaz, painter, 1808; August Gottfried Ritter, organist and composer, 1811; Allan Pinkerton, founder of the Pinkerton detective agency, 1819; Henry Fawcett, politician, 1833;

Francis Brett Hart, novelist, 1836; Jacob Maris, painter, 1837; Ludwig II, King of Bavaria, 1845; Clara Bow, actress, 1905; Ruby Eibel Keeler, actress and dancer, 1909; Bob Crosby (Robert George Crosby), dance bandleader, 1913; Leonard Bernstein, conductor and composer, 1918; Deaths: St Louis IX, King of France, a victim of the plague, 1270; Jan van der Meer (Jan Vermeer van Haarlem), painter, buried 1691; David Hume, philosopher and historian, 1776; Jean-Etienne Marie Portalis, jurist and politician, 1807; James Watt, engineer and inventor, 1819; Sir William (Friedrich Wilhelm) Herschel, astronomer, 1822; Karl

Leberecht Immernann, poet, playwright and novelist, 1840; Michael Faraday, chemist and physicist, 1867; Rudolf, leader of the US Nazi party, shot dead 1967; Truman Capote, author, 1984. On this day: the independence of Uruguay (the Banda Oriental) was declared, 1825; a revolution against the Netherlands union erupted in Brussels, 1830; the first daily scheduled airline flights started between London and Paris, 1919; the Treaty of Berlin was signed, making peace between Germany and the United States, 1921; Ramsey MacDonald formed a National Government, 1931; Paris was liberated by the Allies, 1944; the XXVIII

Olympic Games opened in Rome, 1960. Today is the Feast Day of St Elisha, St Genesius of Arles, St Genesius the Comedian, St Gregory of Utrecht, St Joan Antide-Thouret, St Joseph Calasandrus, St Louis IX, King of France, St Memas of Constantinople and St Patricia.

Changing of the Guard - The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; F Company Scots Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Grenadier Guards.

150 من الامم

business & city

FINANCIAL JOURNAL
OF THE YEAR

Business news desk: tel 0171-293 2636 fax 0171-293 2098
BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

WCRS founder says bad advice cost him £1m

Tom Stevenson
Financial Editor

One of the stars of the advertising industry's 1980s heyday is still fighting for compensation from a leading private client stockbroker, five years after he claims bad advice and negligent handling of his account cost him more than a million pounds.

In a dramatic clash of cultures between Soho and the Square Mile, Ron Collins, the prize-winning "creative" who co-founded the WCRS advertising agency, says he lost a fortune because of the way a discretionary portfolio was run for him by Credit Suisse Asset Management.

After months of disagreement and reams of increasingly acrimonious correspondence, the Securities and Futures Authority was called in last year to try and reconcile the warring parties, but the matter remains unresolved.

At the heart of the tale, whose cameo roles include walk-ons by Hugh Grant, Elizabeth Hurley and Uri Geller, lies the collapse in value of Mr Collins's holding of more than 2 million shares in the agency, which by the time of the fall had been renamed Aegis.

From a high in 1989 of 376p, Aegis shares fell to a low of 12.5p in 1993 as recession and the over-expansion of the late 1980s boom came home to roost. During two hectic weeks of panic selling in the summer of 1992, they tumbled from 95p to 39p before Mr Collins finally sold out.

On 29 June 1992, his shares were worth almost £2m, having reached a peak value of more than £7m. By the time they were finally disposed of on 13 July, their value had plummeted to £800,000.

According to Mr Collins, Credit Suisse failed to inform him of the precipitate fall in his Aegis shares and dissuaded him from selling until the shares had lost most of their value. He also alleges the broker failed to diversify his portfolio away from its reliance on just one share in a notoriously volatile and cyclical sector. Credit Suisse, which was

backed up by the SFA's Complaints Bureau, puts the blame on Mr Collins who, the firm says, made a policy of diversification impossible to carry out by withdrawing cash to fund his "extravagant" lifestyle as fast as it was realised by share sales.

In addition to the high cost of getting divorced, Mr Collins acquired Littleton House, the £650,000 property in which Elizabeth Hurley and Hugh Grant hid from the press after allegations linked the actor to Divine Brown, a Los Angeles prostitute.

Despite refusing to accept responsibility for Mr Collins's loss, Credit Suisse did, however, admit in a letter to him that "the account has not been managed in line with our standard practice". It also conceded that because it did not follow Aegis closely itself it had had to rely on outside advice on the shares, which through-out the rapid decline in their price remained positive.

The yawning gulf between the two sides emerged clearly from an internal Credit Suisse memo, seen by the *Independent*, in which one of the firm's fund managers described a visit to Mr Collins's Wiltshire farmhouse.

Underlining the culture clash, the memo said of Mr Collins: "He is 56 but bohemian in appearance with a short pony-tail."

After describing the adman's interest in astrology and star signs, and his new girlfriend's interest in yoga, the note concluded: "He seems to rely very heavily on his friend, Uri Geller, for advice. I would suggest that his lifestyle is somewhat extravagant."

According to Credit Suisse, the firm explained clearly to Mr Collins when he opened an account in 1987 at the height of his successful advertising career that it would be prudent to diversify his portfolio. However, by 1989, although it had sold £900,000 worth of Aegis shares, the diversification was no further ahead because of Mr Collins's persistent withdrawals.

Later the firm advised against selling any more shares

because of the weak price: "Our strategy was to sell on strength and we were looking for that strength to return. At no point did we receive outside advice that we should alter this strategy - broker comment was favourable."

When Mr Collins turned to the SFA, the City watchdog which regulates stockbrokers, he received short shrift. In a letter from James Carver of the SFA's complaints bureau, he was told: "These panic sell-offs are always difficult to judge whether you are an amateur or a professional. I can well understand you worrying about your shares just as the broker would say 'Don't panic, there is nothing wrong with this company. It will recover in due course'."

The SFA went on to tell Mr Collins that, despite the discretionary agreement with Credit Suisse, he could have made an execution-only order which "would have relieved the firm of all responsibility for the judging of the sale of shares. It seems that you did not take on that role until you did decide to sell the shares at about 40p."

Mr Collins, who admits he is a novice in financial matters who would have no understanding of the difference between discretionary and execution-only management of his account, recalls that the fund manager in charge of his account only agreed to sell the shares after "I swore at him, and ordered him to sell, reminding him that the shares were in free-fall as we spoke."

The SFA concluded: "The firm cannot be made responsible for a judgement or opinion on a particular investment that turned out to be incorrect as long as that opinion was supported by sound reasoning based on research made available to the firm."

Mr Carver told Mr Collins he could take the matter to arbitration, but warned him that the maximum claim he could make under that procedure would be £50,000.

He ended: "It seems that we have reached the end of the road in relation to conciliation."



Wheeling out new recipes: Stephen Joseph (left), who has invested in the management buy-in of Shippam's, and Hagen Shute of venture capital backer NatWest Ventures

Fish paste maker Shippam's to float

Tom Stevenson

Shippam's, whose meat and fish pastes are still synonymous with school-trip lunches, is planning a stock market flotation. The proposed public quote, within three years, was disclosed following a management buy-in of the business this weekend from Grand Metropolitan.

Steven Joseph, who with other directors has invested "several hundred thousand pounds" for just over a third of the company, believes Shippam's has a bright future in the fast growing chilled ready meals market.

He plans to use the paste maker as a springboard for a sequence of food company acquisitions to create a business he hopes will have sales of around £200m by the time of its stock market debut.

This weekend's buy-in, thought to have a value of just under £20m, was backed by NatWest Ventures, which is also expected to provide finance for Shippam's acquisitive growth. It has taken 65 per cent

of the company's equity, with other debt provided by Bank of Scotland.

According to Mr Joseph, market research has shown that the Shippam's name could be readily transferred to food products beyond its traditional expertise in the little ribbed jars. It is looking at moving into packaged groceries and other recipe dishes.

"Shippam's is an established business with a well known brand name which will continue to develop its range of sandwich products and ready meals," he said. "The backing of NatWest Ventures will provide us with the financial strength to grow the business."

It is currently in canned ready-made curries but these have been losing out to the chilled meals that have been such a success for retailers such as Marks & Spencer and Sainsbury's.

Shippam's was founded more than 200 years ago and was a family-run business until its acquisition by American food group Pet in the 1980s. Grand-Met acquired Pet two years ago.

Asian markets could be over the worst

Cautious optimism is returning and even George Soros expects a rebound, writes Stephen Vines

"The so called crisis is more or less over," said Hong Kong's Financial Secretary Sir Donald Tsang, before jetting off for a visit to Australia this weekend.

In recent weeks East Asian stock markets have tumbled and currencies have been under such severe pressure that governments have been forced to accept devaluations which in some cases wiped billions of dollars off the value of local currencies.

Although last week saw continuing declines in stock prices as Asian currencies hit new lows, a cautious mood of optimism was creeping back into the markets by the end of the week.

George Soros, the American based fund manager, who is alleged to have moved heavily into Asian markets and emerged as public enemy number one, said in an interview yesterday that he was expecting a rebound in these markets.

Interviewed by Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post*, Mr Soros said that the pendulum in regional currency markets had swung too far and he expected to see irregular trading fade soon.

Those remarks are unlikely to placate regional leaders, who accuse Mr Soros and a

clutch of American hedge fund managers of wreaking havoc in markets which they say are basically sound, aside from their vulnerability to international speculators. They maintain that the situation in East Asia is nothing like that which prevailed in Mexico during the 1995 peso crisis, which was based on genuine economic instability.

Malaysia's Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad, has been the most outspoken critic of the speculator's activities. Over the weekend he reinforced his criticism in typically robust style. "All these countries have spent 40 years trying to build up their economy," he said, "and a moron like Soros comes along with a lot of money to speculate and ruin things."

There was some suggestion that Dr Mahathir and Mr Soros would meet next month in Hong Kong at the IMF/World

Bank conference, but the Malaysian Prime Minister said firmly that he had no wish to meet the American financier.

Other regional leaders, in less forceful terms, have expressed alarm at their economies being held to ransom by the vagaries of international speculation. This indignation has probably been more vivid in Singapore than elsewhere. In the middle of this month, when the currency turmoil was at its height, the Singapore dollar lost almost 8 per cent of its value against the US dollar.

Compared to the losses in neighbouring Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia, this fall was modest but Singaporeans are used to seeing their currency appreciate in value while their neighbours flounder. The Singapore dollar has been the strongest currency in the region and although it is now gaining ground again it appears to

have fallen for no other reason than Singapore's location at the heart of a region where other currencies were tumbling.

Hong Kong, with \$64bn dollars in foreign reserves at its disposal, making it seventh in the world league of foreign reserve holdings and second in the world on a per capita basis, also found its currency under pressure. However, a bout of highly aggressive market activity by the Hong Kong Monetary Authority ensured that the local currency barely budged from its fixed link with the US dollar, making it the only Asian currency not to have devalued in the past few weeks. Even Mr Soros concluded that speculation against the Hong Kong dollar was a mug's game.

Yet there has to be a reason why international speculators suddenly seized on East Asian currencies as a vulnerable point for attack. The starting point was Thailand. In the decade from 1985 to 1995 it enjoyed the highest growth rate in the world. Export-led growth and heavy foreign investment appeared to be offering a secure future for the Thai economy.

Below the surface was an extraordinary malaise of poor regulation, rampant insider trading, false valuations and red-hot speculative activity that inevitably gave way to uncontrollable overheating. In the fallout 58 financial institutions collapsed, the stock market went into a spin dive and the Thai currency saw more than 20 per cent wiped off its international value.

The government has been forced to go cap in hand to the International Monetary Fund for a \$16.7bn rescue package and submit itself to a typical IMF-style clutch of stringent economic measures.

The irony of the current situation is that Asian stock and currency prices have fallen to such a degree that the stage is set for speculators to return in search of bargains.

WH Smith set to pick outsider

Nigel Cope
and Tom Stevenson

Stuart Rose, a former director of Burton, has emerged as a front-runner in the race to replace Bill Cockburn as chief executive of WH Smith. But rumours that he has already been offered the job were dismissed by the company yesterday.

He is understood to be one of a short-list of four which will be discussed by Smith's selection committee either later this week or next.

The other three are all internal candidates - Alan Giles, managing director of Waterstone's, Richard Handover,

who runs the WH Smith News distribution arm; and John Hancock, chief executive of the American division.

It emerged over the weekend that Keith Hamill, finance director, has pulled out of the running. Within the last week he has been at the centre of controversy surrounding an alleged bid to garner support for a break-up of the stationery to record and book shops group.

It is also clear that Mr Cockburn, whose shock decision to quit the ailing retailer was announced in June, has already left the business and will not be returning.

Mr Cockburn was supposed to remain at the company un-

til October when he joins BT as head of its domestic operations. But he left at the beginning of August for a month's holiday and will not return.

Insiders say the absence of a chief executive, even one who was about to leave, has left the company without strategic direction.

Jeremy Hardie, WH Smith's chairman, has been running the company, though he is only part-time and the vacuum is thought to have left the three internal candidates for Mr Cockburn's post jockeying for position as factions form behind each of them.


The company says Mr Hardie has not been distracted by the

search for a new chief executive as this has been led by the nominations committee.

That consists of three of the group's non-executive directors: Martin Taylor, chief executive of Barclays Bank, Marjorie Scardino, chief executive of Pearson, and Patrick Lupu, an American who is chairman of DHL Worldwide.

The company will not make an announcement about Mr Cockburn's replacement at its full-year results meeting next Wednesday.

However, it is thought that the successful candidate will be named next month. "We aim not to disappoint," the company said.

STOCK MARKETS											
FTSE 100											
											
FTSE 100 Weekly Index											
Index	Close	Week's chg	Change %	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low		
FTSE 100	4901.10	+35.3	+0.7	5086.80	4055.60	3.37					
FTSE 250	4658.70	-39.5	-0.8	4729.40	4386.20	3.56					
FTSE 350	2365.80	+9.9	+0.4	2438.00	2017.90	3.41					
FTSE SmallCap	2253.44	+10.0	+0.4	2374.20	2178.29	3.19					
FTSE All-Share	2312.11	+9.7	+0.4	2376.39	1988.78	3.39					
New York	7887.91	+193.25	+2.5	8259.31	5032.94	1.69					
Tokyo	18650.17	-675.9	-3.5	20881.07	17303.85	0.81					
Hong Kong	15429.75	-867.1	-5.1	16873.27	12055.17	2.84					
Frankfurt	4086.01	-68.8	-1.8	4438.93	2848.77	1.30					
MAIN PRICE CHANGES											
Shares - Top 3			Index - Top 3			Index - Top 3			Index - Top 3		
Shares	Index	1st Chg	2nd Chg	Index	1st Chg	2nd Chg	Index	1st Chg	2nd Chg	Index	1st Chg
British Telecom	436	54.5	14.3	Delta	283.5	31.5	10	7.7			
Premier Oil	47.8	4.8	11.2	Gen Cable	120.5	10	7.7				
Thames Group	864	62.5	10.4	McKinstrie	418.5	34.5	7.6				
OTHER INDICATORS											
Index	Close	Week's chg	Year chg	Index	Close	Week's chg	Year chg	Index	Close		
Oil Brent	18.44	-0.48	-2.72	RPI	157.5	+0.02	152.4	92 Sep			
Gold	324.95	+0.40	387.45	GDP	112.5	+3.40	108.1	24 Oct			
Dollar	202.45	+0.05	250.19	Base Rates	7.00pc	-	5.75	-			

Source: FT Information

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES									
UK interest rates									
Index	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	5 Year	10 Year	30 Year
UK	7.00	7.50	7.11	7.79	7.14	7.93			
US	5.50	6.00	6.38	6.60	6.88	6.85			
Japan	0.47	0.55	2.05	3.12	-	-			
Germany	3.18	3.82	5.72	6.30	6.41	-			
CURRENCIES									
Index	Close	Week's chg	Year chg	Index	Close	Week's chg	Year chg	Index	Close
\$ (London)	1.8052	-0.0001	1.5486	£ (London)	0.6230	+0.19	0.8457		
\$ (New York)	1.8115	+0.0001	1.5513	£ (New York)	0.6205	-0.19	0.8441		
DM (London)	2.9171	-1.04pt	2.3164	DM (New York)	1.8173	-0.10pt	1.4959		
¥ (London)	188.451	-0.022	187.979	¥ (New York)	117.400	-0.340	108.475		
₹ (London)	101.7	-0.4	85.1	₹ (New York)	105.5	-0.8	96.5		

BUSINESS TO BUSINESS

High-income territories now available

Operate in a fast expanding dynamic environment with a product & service in constant demand. And get full management and marketing support. If you want to take part in the best supported, most dynamic, constantly moving business currently available in the hydraulic industry then contact Status today and take your first step towards realising your full potential.

Ring the Franchise Director on 01952 750333 (day) or 01625 820047 (eve) or write to:

Status Hydraulics Ltd
Status House
Cambridge Business Park
Mild, Flintshire CH7 1XB

STATUS HYDRAULICS

£364 extra

Average weekly profits last 2 years
"the most enjoyable profit I've ever made"

- Just 1 hour each Saturday
- No stock, no selling
- Operate anywhere
- Not MLM or franchise

01452 532415 24 hrs, 7 days

Prime Analysis

To advertise in this section please call Jonathan Wilson on 0171 293 2742.

BUSINESS PARTNER £60,000+ POTENTIAL

Lawyer offers opportunity for non-lawyer to join leading professional consultancy in massive multi-million pound facilities related market.

Unrivalled training and ongoing management support provided for an ambitious individual who will need to have good references, strong communication skills and £15,000 capital to invest. Start full or part time.

Please call Mr Allison on: 01982 863915

ACCORDS TO OAK TREES LTD related phone 07000 74 84 85 NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY 01462 535729

FIELD ELECTRIC Ltd

Tel: 01438 353781
Fax: 01438 359397

9" PHILIPS MONO VGA MONITOR 640x480 9" GRADE £16.85
12" SVGA COLOUR MONITOR NEC/COMPTON/ETC 'A' GRADE £32.50
14" SVGA COLOUR MONITOR BY AT&T/DELL/COMPTON/ETC 'A' £42.50
15" SVGA COLOUR MONITOR (DIGITAL) AT&T/DELL/COMPTON/ETC 'A' £146.50
HARD DRIVES/SYSTEMS/PLOTTERS/PC CARDS/ADAPTERS/ETC
CIP RATES PLEASE RING CALLERS BY APPOINTMENT ALL PRICES INC 17% VAT

Mobile Phones

FREE PHONE AND FREE ACCESSORIES

NEW MOTOROLA m30 SMALLER, LIGHTER & LONGER BATTERY THAN THE NOKIA 6.1

FREE ACCESSORIES

- LEATHER CASE
- CAR CHARGER
- SPARE BATTERY
- DESKTOP CHARGER
- IN-CAR HOLDER
- MAINS CHARGER
- 3 YEAR WARRANTY
- 1 YEAR INSURANCE
- INCLUSIVE CALLS
- 24 HOUR REPLACEMENT

BUY ONE GET ONE FREE ON TALKSHARE PLUS
MAIL ORDER SPECIALISTS
FREEPHONE 0500 828180

All offers are subject to status and connection fee of £30 + VAT and 12 month agreement to the Orange Network. A top up of £4.99 will be charged for delivery.

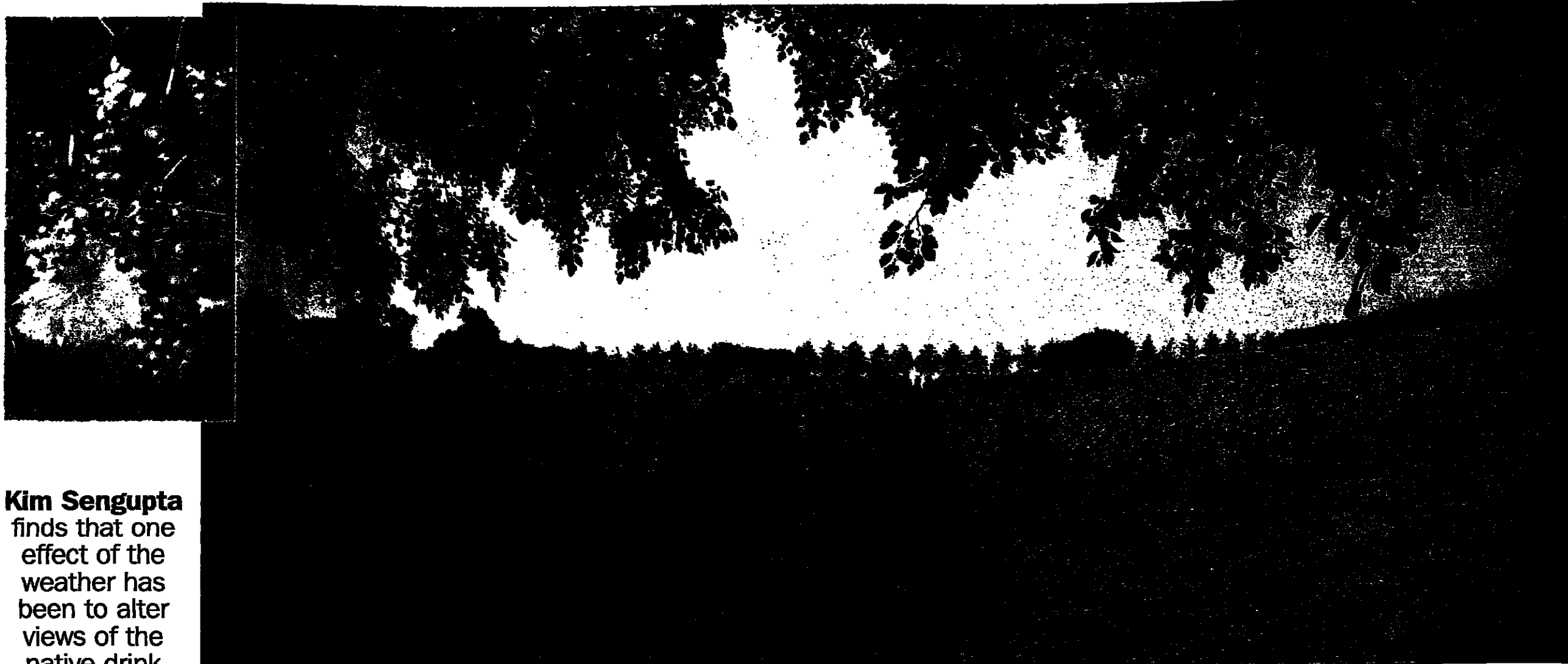
The Kensington Park Hotel

16-32 De Vere Gardens
London W8 5AG
Tel 0171 937 8080
Fax 0171 937 7616
Contact: Jan-Willem Lansen

With 14 meeting rooms, the Kensington Park Hotel is one of London's leading venues for conferences, meetings or private parties and dinners. Our dedicated and professional staff are happy to tailor make your event to suit your purposes. With half day meetings, daily delegate and 24 hour arrangements available, together with attentive service and excellent food this is the ideal venue for any event.

news

The sun shines on English wine



Kim Sengupta finds that one effect of the weather has been to alter views of the native drink

Pressing issue: Lamberhurst vineyard, in Kent, one of Britain's largest, lost many grapes to early frost but the survivors are expected to produce a crop of fine wines

Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

The recent scorching sunshine has been blamed for ills ranging from marital strife to road rage, but for English wines it could herald a renaissance.

The industry in Britain has been described as "small but imperfectly formed" by some snobs. But in vineyards from Kent to Gloucestershire, Surrey to Norfolk, there is quiet optimism that this year's vintage will be a significant step in changing public perceptions about the native drink.

Production of English wine has risen steadily over the past decade: in 1986, 319 vineyards in England and Wales produced 8,000hl of wine; by 1995, 419 vineyards were producing 12,795hl.

In the Bordeaux region, the heat and clear skies have led to the earliest harvest this century, and promises of some of the greatest wines of our time. La Tour Martillac and Smith-Haut-Lafite are already picking

their grapes and others such as Lafite-Rothschild, Petrus and Margaux are set to follow soon.

Over here, things are also looking good at vineyards such as Lamberhurst, Three Choirs, and Elmham Park. The early spring frost in England which led to the loss of large numbers of grapes, in many vineyards almost half the crop, in fact paved the way for a finer quality of wines, with the surviving grapes

benefiting from the sun and other natural resources.

The industry is making determined efforts to be taken seriously as producers. A generation of young winemakers has studied oenology here and abroad and is now experimenting with new techniques and grapes.

English wine is exported to markets as wide-ranging and eclectic as South Korea, Thailand and Sweden as well as

France and Germany. But problems are posed by the strong pound: it is cheaper to buy a bottle in Calais than over here.

Godfrey Steps, of the Wine and Spirit Education Trust, said: "There is undoubtedly a rise in the popularity of English wines, and this is despite the fact that although 80 per cent of the UK wine market is made up of bottles of £4 or less, most English wines cost more than that".

At Lamberhurst, Kent, one of the largest vineyards in England, more than 40 per cent of the crop died of the frost.

But that means the remainder has less competition for natural resources, and the dry conditions and the sunshine hold out the promise of sweeter grapes and fine wines.

The vineyard uses nine different

grapes, the main ones being Bacchus, Seyval Blanc, and Mullerthurgau. Among the whites, Sovereign and Bacchus are becoming better known, and the '96 Red Reserve was widely praised. The '97 batch of all three are expected to be excellent.

this year's vintage is going to help."

Robin Don, a Norfolk winemaker, also lost around 40 per cent of his grapes in the spring frost. He points out that although the situation looks good on both sides of the Channel at

Park, one of the northernmost in the world, growing Madeleine Angevin, Schoenburger, and Huxelsebe grapes. One of the wines he produces, Norfolk Oyster, is now exported to the Far East.

Martin Fowke, director of Three Choirs vineyard in Gloucestershire, believes this year will see a "cracking vintage". His vineyard escaped the spring frost and should be able to produce their expected volume of 250,000 bottles. The most popular ones are the Three Choirs Estate Premium, and the Bacchus 1996, which last year won the International Wine Challenge seal of approval. Mr Day said: "There is certainly a lot more demand for English wine and at the moment the main problem is lack of supplies."

The lower the yield, the better the wine. In Britain we have lost out in quantity, but not in quality

exceptional. Winemaker Simon Day said: "Roughly speaking, the adage is the lower the yield, the better the wine. We have lost out in quantity, but not in quality. English wine has come a long way recently, and hopefully

present, it may change for the worse if the weather breaks, bringing rain or humidity. However, he adds that if conditions remain as they are, we can expect a very good domestic crop. Mr Don's vineyard, Elmham

'Next thing, you'll say the Canadians are making it'

In a random survey at Canary Wharf, east London, people asked to sample English wine expressed surprise. The test was between a Denbies Riesling 1995, produced at a Surrey vineyard, retailing at £5.99 and a Muscadet de Sèvre et Maine from the Rhine Valley, normally sold at off-licences for £5.00. Simon Parker, working for Morgan Stanley, said: "I do prefer the Denbies, it does appear to have a bit more character than the French wine. The Muscadet is OK, but it is rather bland. The English wine is more interesting."

Louise Robinson, who is about to start her first job with the management consultants Price Waterhouse, opined that the English wine "seems to be more fruity, there is a sort of sparkle to it. I lived in France for a while, and I had

always gone for French wine, and I must admit if I were to to experiment, I would not have thought of trying English wine". Mr Parker's colleague Matthew Yeo preferred the Muscadet, but was willing to try English wine again. "People are much more keen to experiment nowadays, and judging from this, English wine seems to have improved enormously." The last word goes to Nancy Frabua, a holidaymaker from Indianapolis: "English wine, get away!" Even after sipping the Denbies she was unconvinced. The wine must be from somewhere else, she said. "You're having me on! There's no such thing as British wine. We have read a half-dozen guide books ... and none of them mentioned it. Next thing you'll be saying the Canadians are making wine." They do.

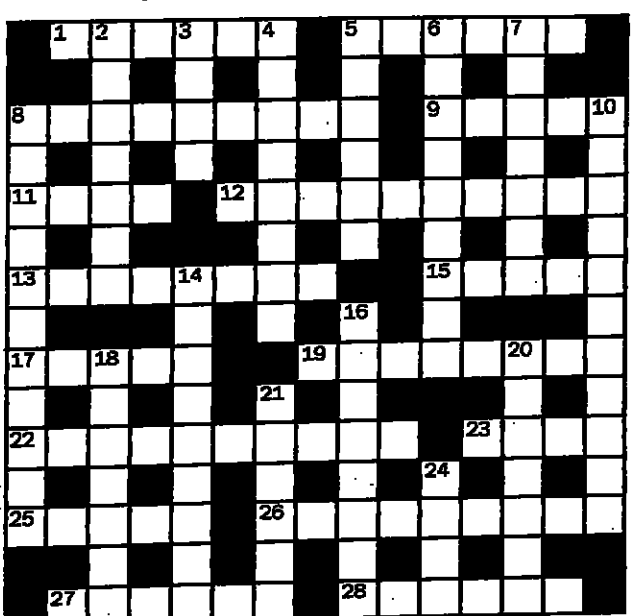


Grape expectations: Simon Parker, pleasantly surprised by a local brew

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3386 Monday 25 August

By Portia



- ACROSS**
- Go up to a price, say (6)
 - One's found in a Cow-per sonnet (6)
 - Otherwise gains by opening in the Far East (9)
 - Top guy's accommodated in base (5)
 - Rule force out as a means of control (4)
 - Put out record with order form (10)
 - Sort of patching item that's worn (8)
 - Issue more than usual (5)
 - European land mammals, we hear (5)
 - Pack a large number into American vessels (8)
 - Lime ran out for making stone (10)
 - American Indian dance I join (4)

- DOWN**
- Proper title (5)
 - Ship a party aboard to produce musical (9)
 - Superior line taken by youth in a teasing way (6)
 - Set of locks suffice (6)
 - Severe defeat involving Norse Prime Minister (7)
 - Honour a number in the Gulf (4)
 - Local run in is jungle-like conditions (8)
 - Caught European after landing punch (6)
 - Upper class doctor's moving into new flat (9)
 - Flower circle I sent up in place (4,5)
 - Seasonal drink? (6,5)
 - Damages piano before practice (11)
 - Prove to be equal to catching game (4,5)
 - Suave and is hard to cajole (8)
 - Lie about royal seat (7)
 - Sign over money to former king (7)
 - Decline in trade is common (6)
 - Scottish writer supplies wine (4)

Catch Swissair's early bird, be in Zurich by 9 a.m., shaking **Off** late starters, doing business while they are still suspended. We're also the last to return. Longer business days can mean shorter business trips. **swissair** + world's most refreshing airline.

Green Flag

Motoring Assistance

WE LEAVE EVERYONE STANDING BUT YOU

IF WE'RE FASTER AND CHEAPER THAN THE AA OR RAC WHY JOIN THEM?

CHOOSE FROM 5 LEVELS OF COVER*

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Recovery Only £29.50 | 4 Comprehensive Gold £93.00 |
| 2 Roadside Assistance £38.00 | 5 Total Protection £145.00 |
| 3 Comprehensive £69.00 | |

On average, we rescue our members in just 35 minutes.* And if we're not with you in less than one hour, you can claim £10 back. What's more, our 6000 skilled mechanics will repair most problems at the roadside. To find out more, contact us right now.

POST TODAY - NO STAMP NEEDED

GREEN FLAG, Freepost, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS99 4GF Please send me further information about GREEN FLAG.

NAME (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms)

ADDRESS

POST CODE

HOME TEL

<http://www.greenflag.co.uk>

*Based on Green Flag's 1996 survey of 100,000 members. *Prices quoted are for continuous payment methods only. Cars registered before 31/12/97 are subject to an additional fee of £15.

مركز الامن